

THE
FOOL OF QUALITY;

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF

HENRY EARL OF MORELAND.

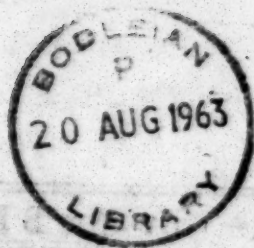
IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY MR BROOKE.

VOL. V.

L O R D O R :

PRINTED FOR A. MILLAR, STRAND,
AND
SILVESTER DOIG, ROYAL EXCHANGE, EDINBURGH.
M DCC, XCH.



THE
FOOL OF QUALITY;
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF
HENRY EARL OF MORELAND.

BUT it may now be thought full time to return to the head branch of this noble family.

Nearly nine years had now elapsed since the earl and his lady had seen or heard of their Harry, except by two or three anonymous notes in a year, giving a short account of his health and accomplishments; in so much that time and long absence had, in a measure, worn him from the regrets of the family; excepting his brother Richard, on whom Harry's generosity, in taking his quarrel upon himself, had left an affecting and indelible impression.

4 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Lord Richard was, indeed, sweetly disposed by nature, and of an aspect and person extremely elegant; and as he had tutors in all branches, in which he chose to be instructed, he learned sufficient, by way of amusement, to render him one of the most accomplished youths in the nation. He was also naturally unassuming, and modestly disposed; but the unremitted adulation of domestics and dependents, with the complimentary artillery of all the neighbours and visitants, could not fail of some impression, at least so far as to make it evident that he was conscious of his condescension when he became familiar with you.

He was, however, easy to all who applied to him for any favour, exceeding charitable to the poor, and particularly fond of our Harry's foster-mother, and kind to her for Harry's sake.

He was turned of nineteen years of age, when his parents, for his amusement and the finishing of his education, resolved to accompany him on a tour to France.

They set out with a suitable equipage, and a nominal tutor, whom they engaged, rather with a view of being a watch upon our young Lord's motions, than the intendant of his principles, or the former of his manners.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 5

Nothing material happened till their arrival at Paris, where the earl took a sumptuous palace in the Rue de Vaugirard.

When he had settled his household, he went to enquire after his intimates of fifty years ago. Some three or four of them had still survived. He renewed his acquaintance with them, and engaged them, their friends and families, to rich and frequent entertainments, whereby his palace speedily became the resort of one of the most elegant circles in Paris.

Young Clinton quickly entered into familiarity and confidence with such of the young nobility as frequented his father's; and they took him abroad on several parties of pleasure, and introduced him to the birds of their own distinguished feather.

He was by no means inclined to a contemptible opinion of himself, and this conduced greatly to his assured easy and lively deportment among his fellows. He found their manners congenial and elementary to his own natural turn and disposition; and he engaged with avidity in all their frolics and debaucheries. In a little time he was scarce to be distinguished from a native, and he acquired the appellation of the elegant Englishman.

As numbers of this gay peerage were of those who led the taste, and gave a

6 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

stamp and currency to the fleeting fashions of France, it is not surprising that they should run into a variety of excesses, which nothing could excuse, and which their quality alone could warrant.

Our young Englishman swam willingly down the stream of pleasure. A warm imagination, susceptible of the slightest impressions; a spirit apt to dissipation; a heart prone to indulgence, though not void of humanity; inaction, affluence, example, adulation, and an impetuosity of nature to an own will and an own seeking, joined to constitute a current, that a youth, burning toward his meridian, had neither the desire nor ability to oppose.

Every year produces a new taste of converse, of writing, and of dressing, at Paris; and, although such tastes are frivolous and transitory, they yet amuse for the season, and grow respectable, and cultivated by being the vogue.

Several ladies of high rank piqued themselves on being given by the public to young Clinton, and were vain of exhibiting him in the Thuilleries. Neither was his conduct accounted scandalous. Intriguing is the fashion. No woman in Paris was at that time supposed exempt from her critical minute; and, in the general, all minutes were presumed suffi-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 7

ently critical. The heart had no concern in the commerce between the sexes ; their amours were commenced and continued without passion, and they parted without reproaches or regret.

If a woman had distinction and fortune sufficient to hold her favours above sale, she was very little degraded by being known to have granted them; and her hotel was as much frequented, and her acquaintance more cultivated, than if she had been chaste and honourable.

Slander, indeed, was a subject in every conversation, not through any apparent malice, but for want of something more entertaining to say. However, it lost much of its point by being so universal ; and as such numbers in high life divided the scandal among them, the respective portions became light and easily portable by individuals.

A pause in converse was dreaded as a reproach to all present. They who could incessantly say something upon nothing, were accounted the reigning cast of what was called good company. They talked upon religion, war, politics, love, philosophy, taste, &c. as smoothe stones that the children call *ducks and drakes*, skim the surface of water without entering its mass. They argued, it is true, with warmth,

3 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

but without attempting to encroach on the province of reason; sprightliness filled up the void of sense; and the quickness of transition, from one topic to another, agreeably supplied the want of connection.

To give Lord Richard a thorough taste of all fashionable extravagances, his young associates engaged him on a lewd party, where twelve of them contributed a hundred Louis per man, for the entertainment of as many courtesans of quality.

On another night, about twenty of this noble posse, being something intoxicated, combined in a licentious frolic of scouring the streets. They accordingly issued sword in hand, terrifying all the men, and making free with all the women whom they happened to meet. At length, toward Pontroyal, one of our libertines behaved with the rudest indecency toward the wife of a citizen, whereon the husband instantly drew, and ran the peer through the body, but, in his turn, was as quickly laid dead on the spot by the comrades of the party whom he had slain.

The uproar and concourse began now to be great; and the patrol, on the alarm, mounted on horses shod with leather, came suddenly and silently upon our young dissolutes, encompassed, took them

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 9

prisoners, and conveyed them all to the Chatelet, except one of the royal blood, whom they did not dare to detain.

Within a few days, however, the murder was hushed up, and those youthful savages were once more let loose upon the public.

In some months after the late adventure, which checked for a season the ebullitions of our Richard, he was introduced by the Marquis de Rouffillon to the most refined circle of company then in Europe, being the select visitants of the most celebrated and the most elegant of all female libertines, Madame Ninon de l'Enclos.

In the course of conversation, to the easy novelty of which young Richard sat attentive in mute astonishment, the subject happened to turn on the education of young men. Pray, Madam, said Richard blushing, and addressing himself to the lady of the house, what is the reason that no gentleman, as is affirmed, can be duly accomplished without the tuition and instructions of some fine woman? Since I came into this company, indeed I have already nearly learned to answer my own question; for, where a lady moves and looks sentiment, in every gesture of her person, and turn of her aspect, she cannot

10 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

fail of imparting a portion of her own elegance to the heart and manners of her beholders. He looked fixedly at Madam Ninon, bowed profoundly, and was silent.

She smiled a look of graciousness to the compliment of the young stranger, and then replied :

My sweet fellow, you are among a set of people, perhaps the best qualified of any in the world to give a solution to all questions without dryness or obscurity ; as we make the sciences themselves both easy and delightful, by carrying philosophy into gallantry and love.

The first man who came into the world was, questionless, the most perfect, as he retained, for a while, within his single person, all the virtues and excellencies, all the amiableness and attractions, that were within the compass of nature to confer ; and which hereafter became divided, and were partly appointed for the portion of another.

When this partition was made, to man was left muscular strength, superior dignity of stature, vigour, action, courage, a port bold and majestic, and, lastly, the sceptre of reason, to rule and moderate in a measure the impetuosity of those qualities !

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 11

But, as woman was formed from the vital powers and cordial faculties that were nearest the heart of man, she was endowed with endearing wants, she was gifted with defects, with a timidity that called for the aid of courage, with a weakness that commanded the duties of support, and the delicate feelings and melting affections were poured into her bosom. Alas, poor wretch, too large a portion of them fell unhappily to her lot. To man had been assigned the regency of the world; but then his dominion was not sole and undivided; for to woman also was assigned the sceptre of submission, that, in meekness, might rule the man who should govern the world. Lastly, she was invested with a form that blushed at its own beauties, a form that swelled into polished roundings, that twined in to grace, over which delight wandered without finding stop or rest.

Hence, man, in seeking woman, seeks a portion of himself; he feels a want, a vacuity, a restless craving without her; and he languishes after his original totality.

But then to be duly united to her, to be duly fashioned by her, he must feel the sweetness of her influence, the magnetism of her attractions; in short, he

must love. The true polish and internal refinement of his manners, cannot be elaborated by the understanding alone; it must fundamentally take its rise from the affections, the touchings and tunings of the heart. Indeed, there lies a kind of covering or icy incrustation over the virtues themselves, till all is thawed, and warmed, and set at liberty, by love.

This doctrine founded unison to the secret feelings of our young Englishman. In the midst of all his enjoyments, of a loose to the gratification of every sensual desire, he yet found an unaccountable void within his bosom, and a lurking sigh would frequently heave at his heart: he felt that he wished and wanted, but did not know what; and he now discovered, for the first time, that woman could confer a bliss infinitely preferable to any he yet had tasted; he now found, that he wished and wanted to love, and to be beloved. He longed to put the lesson of his learned tutoress in practice; and he went early to the opera, that he might behold and contemplate the several beauties as they entered.

He was thus intently occupied, and the house had nearly filled, when he heaved a desponding sigh, at not finding, in all that assembly, a single lady to his taste.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 13

At length, toward the middle of the second act, the next box was opened, and two ladies entered; the one of a grave and matronly appearance, the other a young creature, arrayed in deep mourning, as the moon shining forth from amidst the darkness that surrounds her.

All eyes were instantly turned from every other object, and a long murmur of inquiry and admiration was heard throughout.

Young Clinton's whole soul was collected into the sense of vision, which however did not dare to dwell on the dazzling expanse of her bosom, or fascination of her aspect.

At length she cast a pair of living brilliants upon him, when his face turned to scarlet, and his eyes suddenly sunk beneath the lustre of her's.

Each of them; thief-like, wished to steal an unobserved gaze at the other, but blushed alternately when caught in the fact.

Our Englishman, hitherto, had never wanted his full proportion of assurance, neither a ready fluency of tongue, in all kinds of company: but here, while he wished to speak, all utterance was denied him; and where he wished most to please, he trembled for fear of offending.

14 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

He would have constrained himself, but found that he was not master of his own emotions; a diffidence of his own merit fell suddenly upon him, and a respectful tenderness diffused itself throughout his frame.

He cast an inquisitive look abroad, and grew disturbed and jealous of all who fixed their eyes upon her with any eagerness of attention; but he was soon consoled again, when he observed that she neither saluted nor turned an eye of particular regard on any.

At length the opera ended, and our ladies quitted their box, when Clinton hastened after, and bowing, presented his trepid hand to conduct the fair regent of his heart to her carriage. He made way for her and her elderly guardian through the crowd, and having helped them into their coach, he adventured, for the first time, to break silence, and said:

As I perceive, ladies, that you have no male friend in your train, I will, with your permission, walk by the side of your carriage till I see you safe home.

Your offer, Sir, replied the matron, is extremely gallant; but why put yourself to fatigue? here is room and to spare; pray be pleased to step in. As we have

nothing to conceal with respect to our persons or conduct, we shall be glad of your company.

His heart bounded at the proposal, and in he went; while the elderly lady rose, removed to the back-seat, and made room for him next the magnet by which he was attracted.

Pray, Sir, said Madam Autriche, how did you like the opera? I protest, Madam, said the youth, I know nothing about the matter; my attention was wholly engrossed by a more interesting object. Our countryman, may I presume? No, Madam, I am a native of England. I was thinking as much; you have a modesty, a decency, a delicacy of deportment, that is, without exception, a reproach to all the young gentry of France.

Ah, Madam, exclaimed Clinton, how you strike me with a humiliating sense of my own demerits! Two hours have scarce passed, since I was the most conceited, assuming, loquacious petit-maitre in all Paris: but my divine tutoress here has suddenly taught me to look down upon myself, and to sigh after those excellencies that in time might deserve to attract her regard.

In a little time after, they stopped. Two footmen in mourning-liveries flew

from behind, and one rapped at the door, while the other opened the coach.

As soon as Richard had handed out the ladies, he looked attentively at the house. I hope, Madam, said he to Autriche, you will pardon my taking particular note of a place where I deposit my heart. Sir, said she, on certain conditions, if you are not otherwise engaged, you will oblige us by walking in, and taking some little matter of supper with us. Ah, Madam, he cried, the conditions are already performed; I will sign a carte blanche, insert the terms at your pleasure. It is only, Sir, that you must depart when we think proper; we are not of rank sufficient to set us above censure, and our reputation is yet very precious to us.

They were then lighted up to a superb dining-room, and Madam Autriche left the young pair together while she went to give some orders concerning the household.

Lord Richard, a minute before, would have given the world for the opportunity which was now presented to him; to be alone with the incomparable object of his ardours, what a happiness, what cause of transport! but now that he was possessed of it, he was embarrassed, quite disconcerted. He felt the necessity of beginning a converse, but how to open it was

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 17

a matter which he dreaded to enterprize.—He looked tenderly and confusedly at her and from her—he drew his chair a little nearer—Madam—said he, at length, with a hesitating and tremulous accent—Madam---can you tell me?---I protest I know not--I cannot account for it--that I should be struck so utterly speechless by the presence of an object on which I imagined I could be eloquent for ages.

Pray, Sir, said she bashfully, and musically attempting to turn the subject from herself, do the manners of the English resemble those of the French?---They wish to resemble you, Madam, but they are very awkward copiers. Their clothes are quite in your cut, if they did but know how to put them on. Their ladies too are accounted the fairest women in the world; indeed I know but one fairer; but then they want that animated air, that elegance of mein, that easy swim of movement, that graceful winding of person, which so inimitably distinguishes the ladies of this country from all others upon earth.

Here notice was brought, that supper had been served, and that Madam Autriche waited for them.

During the repast, My lord, says Autriche, some of your people are below, and I am now apprised of the respect which

we are to pay you ; but our error on this head ought hitherto to be excusable ; for though your person and appearance is altogether noble, yet the condescension of your manners no way suited the idea I had of elevated rank. O Madam, said Richard, in the present company all rank must sink, as degraded.

You must not yet, my lord, be deceived in your turn ; we are no better than plain and honest people. This young thing is my niece, the daughter of a principal financier lately deceased. Her riches indeed are next to immense, and she has had all the education that France could confer. But she pretends not to nobility, except by a distant relation, the dowager-marchioness de Rouffe, who is also her god-mother. My precious child here, is unexperienced in the world, quite unknowing and unknown ; mostly confined from her infancy to a convent, till called to attend her father in his last illness ; and now, as a dove newly fledged, she ventures under my guardian-wing, to take a short tour, and look a little abroad. Her name, from her parents and baptism, is Angelica la Lis.

Most aptly denominated, exclaimed the transported youth, an angel in heaven, and the fairest flower upon earth.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 19

Come, my lord, take your glass; you must not expect that we women should keep pace with you rakes at the bottle.

I protest to you, my dear Madam, I am already intoxicated; my soul swims in delight; the fabled nectar and ambrosia of the gods of indulgence are poor to the banquet on which my heart now feeds.

Pray, my lord, do the English ladies put on paint? No, Madam, it is the only article of foppery and folly in which they do not ape the fair ones in France.

Two days ago, I could not but laugh, when a beauty of distinction told me, I should singularly oblige her, if I would favour her with the secret where my niece got her rouge.—In heaven, you surely answered; for nature has provided no such tint upon earth.

In truth, said Autriche, I think it were a pity that Angelica should paint; and I dread lest her god-mother, or other ladies, who may happen to envy her complexion, should persuade her into the fashion and compel her to put on rouge. There is no fear of that, my dear aunt, answered Angelica; I always thought it a defacing rather than any accession to the beauties of nature. Beside, I think it has the guilt of a lie and dishonesty in it; and,

23 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

independent of the impiety of not being satisfied with what God has made us ; it is a fraud and imposition upon the public, and they who practise it should be punished as common cheats and impostors.

O Mademoiselle, cried the lover, to put paint upon that face would be like a sign-dauber employing his odious brush to improve some capital piece of Apelles. And, yet, on second thoughts, I would to heaven that some other covering or mask might be applied, to preserve the sanctitude of that aspect from profane and vulgar gazing, and that the rose of Eden were reserved for my eye alone. She silently rolled her acknowledging orbs upon him, and displayed to him the said rose in its broadest bloom.

I have promised, my love, said Autriche, to introduce you to-morrow to the marchioness your god-mother, and she proposes to introduce you to the grand monde.

O heavens ! exclaimed Richard, you terrify me to death, Madam : introduced to the grand monde ! where audaciousness assumes a latitude in proportion to rank ; where bashfulness, and even decorum, are laughed out of countenance ; and where beauty, though divinely appointed to bow the crest of the great, can

scarcely command respect from the influence of power---would you risk our Angelica into such a fearful peril?

But, Madam, should my alarms want something of their foundation; should all, like me, be at once subdued to her regency, and bow down in instant obeisance before her; she will yet be encircled by jealous and contending numbers, she will be suffocated, perhaps torn to pieces in the struggle, as Romulus was spirited away from the midst of the senate; and each will carry off a portion, a little finger, some part of her precious person, as a relic to be deposited in the temple of love.

In all events, my honoured Madam, she will be utterly lost to me. Such multitudes of dukes, and potentates, and princes of the blood! perhaps the old monarch himself will ravish her from my arms.

Ah, he cried, and cast himself precipitately at the feet of Autriche, my life, Madam, is in your hands; my happiness, all that I am, depends on your pity, your bounty, your friendship, if I dare say it, for I would purchase it with my best blood.

Rise, my lord, pray rise; I will not bear you in that posture; neither till you

bring yourself to speak with more reason and temperance---on those conditions I promise you some interest in her regard. He obeyed, and she continued :

Are you, my lord, wholly a stranger to the laws and customs of France? know you not that love has no manner of concern in any conjugal connexions? that all children, and especially daughters, depend absolutely on the will of their parents or guardians? and that nothing is ever consulted on these occasions, save the promotion of the honour or interests of the family? Are you not also yourself a dependent? Are not your fortunes and inclinations at the pleasure of your father? May he not contract, or espouse you to whomsoever he thinks proper?

By no means, my dear Madam, by no means. My dependence on my father is altogether voluntary, not of legal compulsion. I am indeed so affected by his unmerited indulgence, that I think it would nearly break my heart to disoblige him; but it is not in his power to deprive me either of title or fortune; they were settled by my grandfather on the eldest of the male-issue.

And now, Madam, will you permit me to reason with you a little on the pernicious customs of your country? You as-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 23

firm, that in all treaties of nuptial concernment, your parents and guardians are no way influenced by the inclinations of their offspring or their wards: but does not this also affirm, that they themselves are dead to natural affection and humanity? that they advert solely to the gratification of their own vanity, self-interest, or caprice? and that they savagely betray that tender and secret trust, which God, nature, and the laws, committed into their hands for the happiness of those whom they thus inhumanly sacrifice?

Has not God implanted in our bosoms, from the womb, a special magnetism of affections, of propensities and sympathies, that each may tend and congenially cleave to its like, and so consummate the intended order and beauty of the human species. On the contrary, should aversions and antipathies be constrained and bound together, such a horrid conjunction must be productive of a second chaos, and be finally subversive of the very frame of nature.

Do we not already begin to see the consequence of this fatal article of police to this nation? What numbers of blooming maidens are daily mated, by the avarice or ambition of their disposers, to age, impotence, infirmity, ugliness, to the ob-

24 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

jects of their detestation and loathing during life ! A lot more severe than that which was imposed by the tyrant Mezen-tius, when he bound the devoted persons of the living to the dead !

But then, Sir, said Autriche, would you suffer inexperienced and giddy youth, with a plenitude of warm blood, and a total lack of discretion, to run a-head without rein ? or to launch into the perilous sea of life, without help or helm, without pilot or steerage ?

No, Madam, answered Richard, I would not leave them wholly to an own will ; but neither would I constrain them, I would not compel them to be miserable. Perhaps there is not any instance of prostitution so abominable in the common stews, as that of forcing a young creature into abhorred embraces. Where a virgin, in the tide of youthful blood and warm wishes, is thus cruelly made a victim to the views of her disposers, will she not be tempted to indemnify herself for the disappointment of her happier prospects ? You cannot be ignorant, Madam, that it is frequently the case. I have been told, that there are not twenty nobles now in Paris who can rationally assure themselves of the purity of their descent. If woman may not legally, is it not to be dreaded she will li-

centiously have her wish! Are these things consonant to the divine purposes and institution of marriage, where man said of woman, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife?"

On the contrary, among the gentry of France, such is the prevalence of fashion, that marriage is become rather a matter of divorce than of union between the sexes; and the surest way of separating male and female for life, from every kind of communion with each other, is to join them against their wills in the indissoluble bands of wedlock.

I have made free, Madam, to lay before you the reflections and apprehensions of persons and heads much wiser than my own. I am further informed, that the weight of these examples is now in its descent to the lower ranks of people, and is likely, in process of time, to depopulate the nation. I pray heaven that the contagion may not reach my native country, and that our English ladies, in time to come, may not be suspected, perhaps impeached of incontinence.

I vow my lord, said madam Autriche, that you speak and prophecy like a sage of some pristine æra, at an age that our

young nobility scarcely begin to think. What you have said, I assure you, has no little weight with me; and I will further consider and digest it at leisure.---But it begins to grow late.

I understand you, Madam; whatever pain it may cost me, I submit to your pleasure. But then, this formidable to-morrow, this fearful introduction!--do you propose to be back early, Madam?---I fear not; I believe it would not be allowed us.---May I presume, Madam, to call, to know if you are returned?---By no means.---Well, you may then, said she laughing; I profess, you look so sad upon a refusal, that I can scarce find in my heart to refuse you any thing. A good night to you, my lord; had I a world depending at suit, I could not desire a more fervent advocate. He bowed separately to each, and sighing, retreated to his own lodgings, which he had taken on a late indisposition of his mother's, for fear of disturbing her with the noise of his riotous associates.

All the following day, Lord Richard forbore to make use of the privilege allowed him, for fear of having his motions attended to; but he ordered a servant on the watch at an opposite house, to fly and give him instant notice of the return of

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 27

the ladies. This however did not happen till it was turned of eleven, and then he judged it of the latest to intrude upon them.

The next day, as soon as he supposed the task of the toilet to be over, he flew to attend them; and was graciously received, by the one with a smile, and by the other with a blush.

As soon as they were seated, Well, Madam, said Richard, with an alarmed voice and accent, what have I to fear? for I have not yet presumed to lay hold upon hope. There is nothing to be feared, my lord, from the fairest youth in the land, whatever we have to apprehend from old age and infirmities. Indeed marshal Lefac and the duc de Provence gazed on my Angelica with an inflamed and intemperate appetite, as though, like the two elders of Israel, they desired to fill themselves with her beauty. Your friend the marquis de Rouffillon was also of the company; he professes a singular esteem and attachment for you; indeed he spoke of your personal merits, and set your family and fortunes in a light so highly superior to what you represented them, as shews you a youth of the greatest honour and probity, and incomparably

of the greatest modesty perhaps upon earth.

Ah then, cried Richard, and cast himself once more at the feet of Madam Autriche, will you be so good as to abridge the state of my present misery ; to dispel my doubts, my alarms, my torturing suspenses, and those dreams of horrible bodings that already have deprived me of rest, health, and appetite.

Hey day, cried Autriche, and laughed, what a hurry we are in ! you are scarce three days acquainted with us, and you want to shackle us for life. Rise and I will disclose a certain secret. You have a very warm friend in my bosom, I assure you ; but then, Angelica, as you lately argued, ought also to be consulted ; and I have not yet enquired what her inclinations may be ; but if I am allowed to guess, her antipathy to you is not of the violent kind.

He then threw himself, in silent rapture, at the feet of his idol. He seized her hands, he pressed, he kissed, and warmed their wax with his tears, while she bashfully fixed a downcast assent upon him.

Again he rose and turned to Madam Autriche. He took her hands, he kissed

them alternately, and with a tender eagerness petitioned for her favour.

I know not, my lord, said Autriche, what my niece's answer may be, but were I an Angelica, I honestly confess I would not reject your suit. Could you procure the Earl's consent, I know of no further obstruction to your mutual happiness.

Ah, Madam, said Richard, were the ceremony once over, my father's concurrence must of necessity follow. At present my mother is ill ; my father not in temper ; should I come abruptly upon him, he might happen to refuse me ; and then should I marry, as with your good pleasure I most certainly should, so peremptory a disobedience would double my guilt in his eyes. No, my dearest Madam, permit me to watch the hour of his parental indulgence ; his consent, or at least his pardon, cannot fail of being the consequence. In the mean time, on my knees I beg it, let us, let us be united, past the power of parents, rivals, potentates of the world, to tear us in sunder ; prevent my death, restore my health, by giving me to happiness !

In short, Richard urged his suit with such prevailing oratory, that they were married the week following, in the presence of a few of Angelica's relations,

30 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

and two or three of his own domestics, in whom he could confide.

Happiness is sweetly fleeting; it is not to be measured by time; it has no rubs to mark or distinguish the periods; it skims upon eagle's feathers, or rests upon down.

In about a month after marriage, when Richard began to wake from the delirium of his bliss, he went, from time to time, to pay his duty to his parents; and he exerted his utmost, his most winning address, to introduce some indulgent, some favourable opportunity for disclosing the great event; but he imagined that his father received him with unwonted coolness, and cast an eye of distance and suspicion upon him; and this repeatedly deterred him from entering on the affair.

The mystery was this: On Richard's forsaking his late dissolute courses, it was intimated to the Earl, by the nominal tutor, that he had abandoned his associates, and was probably engaged in some secret intrigue that might be productive of danger to his person, or disgrace to his family. To prevent this, the Earl wished to precipitate him into marriage. On a visit to the duke of Sully, he had seen his lovely daughter, the young marchioness du Pres; and, on the present alarm, he waited pur-

posely on the duke, to treat of an union between the families. He offered unmeasurable settlements; the matter at length was concluded; the parents signed a contract in behalf of the absent parties; and a day of no distant date was appointed for the nuptials.

In about three months after the union of our young lord with his blessed and blessing bride, she happened to be on a visit to the marchioness her god-mother. The duke of Sully was there. He gazed with an earnest amazement on Angelica. Bless me, said he to the marchioness, what a strong resemblance there is between this fairest of creatures and my daughter! The advantage, indeed, is vastly on the side of this young lady; yet I think it a happiness that my child should be like her in any respect.

My lord, replied the marchioness, you do my kinswoman a singular honour; I hope the young marchioness your daughter is well. Well, Madam, I thank you; I have lately procured an advantageous match for her. Do you know young Clinton, Madam, sole heir to the title and immense fortunes of the English earl of Moreland? he is her consort-elect; all matters are concluded on, and next Monday

32 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

is appointed for the union of the young pair.

The wretched Angelica found herself suddenly sick, but exerted her utmost efforts to preserve herself from the shame of swooning before company. She rose, complained of her head, made a retreating curtsy, got into her carriage, and hurried home.

Soon after, she sent her favourite maid on some little matter of commission. She then hastened to undress, and ordered her woman in waiting to tell her lord, when he came home, that she was gone to bed indisposed, and requested not to be disturbed.

The next morning she arose, and stepped down to a back parlour, where she met her Richard. You do not look this morning as well as I could wish, my angel. Not quite well, said she; but I trust it will soon be over. So she constrained herself, for a time; and they breakfasted on some exquisite caudle, which she had prepared for the purpose.

As soon as breakfast was over, she turned a wistful eye of languishing melancholy upon him. You wished to leave me then, my lord, said she; you wanted to be parted from me; but you shall ne-

ver part from me, my love; in life we were inseparable, and in death we will be undivided. I part from you! my Angelica, exclaimed the astonished youth! what sudden phrenzy is this, that has fallen upon my beloved? Nay, cried she, deny it not, I have proofs beyond controversion; I had it all from the duke of Sully, from the mouth of the father himself; you were next Monday to have been married to his daughter the young marchioness du Pres.

He looked amazedly and affrightedly at her and from her, and then exclaimed with a vehement oath, I know her not, I never saw her, I know nothing about her, I never heard a syllable to the purport of what you are saying. But were she the princess-royal of France, were she a virgin next to the blessed one herself, I would not exchange my Angelica, my flower of the world for her, though that world were to be added to the weight of her dowry!

Then, then, shouted Angelica, I am a wretch indeed! the most accursed reptile that ever crawled upon earth! You have taken a serpent to your bosom, my lord, and it has stung you to death. In the rage of offended love, I have poisoned

you, myself, and the dear infant that was but just quick within me!

Richard stayed not to answer or expostulate. Run Melton, he cried, enquire out the nearest and most skilful physician, tell him how matters are, bid him hasten with some antidotes, if it is not yet too late. Here, Guillaume! fly to my father, intreat him here directly; tell him I am married, and poisoned by the jealousy of my wife. Cruel, cruel Angelica! parted from you, did you say? Ah! no, no, no! they should sooner have served me like Metius; I would rather have been torn, limb from limb, by wild horses.

Here Angelica, in the agony of self-reproach, suddenly fainted away. Richard thought all was over, and gave a shout of desperation.

The physician soon came, and first administered to the young nobleman a strong emetic. He next endeavoured to recover the lady from her swoon, but long without success.

Meantime, the domestics were apprised that their lord and lady were dying, and they all gathered about them, drowned in tears, and sobbed out their wailings.

At this period the earl hurried into the room. Terror, grief, and resentment,

were legibly pictured on his countenance, and avowed the conflicting tumult of the passions within.

As the dose which Lord Clinton took was uncommonly potent, he was verily assured that his last hour was come.

While the earl walked distractedly about the chamber, he turned an eye of exasperated pity on his son. Ay Sir, says he, these are the fruits of disobedience, of the breach of filial duty to the tenderest, the best of parents. Ah, my father, cried the anguishing youth, you see that I am dying; add not to my sufferings, by the sense of your displeasure! Alas, I doubt that you yourself have occasioned my death, as also that of my incomparable wife and infant. But let us exchange forgiveness at this tremendous hour: I forgive you your clandestine contract; O, pardon me also my clandestine marriage, my father!

Hereupon the earl's passions were all absorbed by that of woe; he melted into tears, and sobbed aloud like an infant.

When the physician had, in vain, applied salts and spirits to the temples and nose of the lady, he drew some of the purest blood that ever blued the veins, or crimsoned the surface of a human complexion.

36 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

At length Angelica heaved a deep sigh, and opened her despairing eyes on the light. The doctor then hastily urged her to swallow an emetic ; but she thrust it from her, and cried, No, no, I will none of your medicines ; I will not be recovered. I will die, I will die ; and, by the intenseness of my sufferings, try to expiate, in a measure, the offence which I have committed against my precious lord.

This last sentiment, in a degree, reached the already softened heart of the late exasperated earl. He had hitherto but glanced at her with an eye of utter abhorrence and the deadliest detestation : but now, when he beheld her, in the wringings of penitential desolation, in all the languor of almost expiring but still consummate beauty, he could not but sigh to himself --O, what a pity !

The doctor at length, having pored for some time into a porcelain bowl, said, I profess I cannot discern the smallest symptom of poison here. Pray, who went for the poison ? is there any one present who is supposed to have procured it ?

A genteel young woman then, all trembling, advanced from the groupe of servants. It was I, Sir, who unluckily procured it, says she ; but indeed I meant no harm to any one ; I would a thousand

times rather have poisoned myself, than the dearest sweetest lady that ever was served by woman.

O then, cried the earl, it is not impossible but that God may yet be gracious to us! Pray, mistress, inform us minutely how it happened.

Yesterday afternoon, so please you, my lady went on a visit to the marchioness of Rouffi her god-mother. She staid about two hours, and then returned; but, holy Mary! so altered, so dejected, and dismayed, she looked already as half dead, and as one who wished to be wholly so. Maria, says she, I am not very well, order Auben to get some white-wine whey, and to warm my bed. Here, do you step to the apothecary's: a night or two ago I heard a scratching about my bed; I am sure it must be rats, and I detest them above all things; you must get me some poison for them.

On my way to the shop, I shivered to think that some fearful calamity must have fallen on my darling mistress, and that she might possibly intend the poison for herself. So I told the apothecary I wanted poison for rats, but suspected it was meant for some other purpose; and I desired him to make up a powder as like

38 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

it as he could, but such as could do no manner of hurt.

To-day, however, when I saw my lady lying for dead, and my lord in such an agony as was near to expiring, I was sure the apothecary had deceived me, and I would have given my own life for a sou. For my lady, Sir, was always such a creature of heaven, the pleasure of serving, of seeing and being about her, was to me the most valued, the sweetest of all wages! You are a worthy wench, cried the earl; bad as matters still are, I bless God that they are no worse; and so saying, down he sat.

Angelica then arose, and, with a graceful, though dejected timidity, advanced hesitatingly toward the father of her Clinton. She sunk on her knees before him, without daring to look up.

I hope not, said she, in a sweetly-breathing accent, soft as zephyr, and scarcely audible, I hope not for pardon from the lord and master of my lord; but, O, I would, if possible, avert part of his displeasure. So saying, she bent her head, like a rose overcharged with rain, and shed the appeasing shower on the feet of her father.

At length he exclaimed, O, you have conquered—you must ever conquer!—I

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 39

can no longer withstand you. Look up to me, my child, look up to me, my daughter! Rise to my arms, to my heart, and live there for ever!

Lord Richard now drew nigh to put in his claim also to the season of grace. He bent on one knee, and taking his father's hand with a tender and respectful pressure, he kissed it, and said, Pray pardon me, too; give me also your pardon, O my father! Pardon you, my son! cried the earl; on my soul I could not have pardoned you, had you failed to have been captivated by the sweetness of such enchantments.

But come, my children, your dear mother lies languishing on the bed of her sickness. She may be alarmed; some murmur of these matters may come to her ear; let us go and console her. Bring your domestics with you, for I do not purpose that we ever shall part any more.

Here Angelica tript out, but soon after returned with a small parcel of papers. Here, my lord, says she to the earl, is some little matter of indemnification for the cost to which I must put you; it contains a few bills on the bank of Amsterdam. I have pressed them upon your son; but he laughs at me, and says, he is as yet too young and giddy to become a

trustee. I beseech you then to ease me of the incumbrance, my lord. It is my wish to be dependent; to depend and attend upon you, my most honoured father, with all possible tendernefs, duty, and delight.

You are the darling of the world, exclaimed the transported earl, and clasped her eagerly to his bosom.

He then looked over the bills, and cried, Bless me! why, here is a portion for a princess of the blood-royal. They do not constitute the whole of my fortunes, my lord; but, as I knew no want, I was not solicitous to call in the remainder: and, indeed, I am no way covetous of fortune, further than as it may render my unworthiness more worthy.

Well, my love, said the earl, I accept this generous instance of your confidence; and I promise to pay you the full interest of your deposit, provided you call not upon me oftner than my own rents come in.

She laughed, and kissed his hand, and he led her gallantly to his coach.

As soon as they got home, the earl left the young pair below, and stept up to his lady.

When he had solicitously enquired after her health, My dear, said he, I have

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 41

brought you home a curiosity, that I flatter myself will be highly entertaining to you. What is it, my lord? it is a young female creature; but of what world it is a native, I cannot directly say, as I never saw any thing like it on earth. This is some drollery of yours. Not at all, I am downright serious; I have brought you home a daughter, even the lovely and peerless bride of your own darling Richard. Will you allow her to come up, and pay her duty to you?

The countess then in a flutter, ordered her woman to raise her a little; and having put on a sumptuous bedgown, with a suitable night-dress for her head, she sat up, supported by one of her maids behind.

In some time after, the young lord and his lady ascended. They approached with gentle reverence. They kneeled down by the bedside; and each of them took tender possession of a hand.

I come, Madam, said Angelica, kissing the hand that she held, and dropping a tear upon it, I come to offer your ladyship a new servant. I cannot boast of my skill, but my duty and affectionate tendance shall in time, I trust, compensate for my want of address.

42 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

The countess gazed over Angelica with a passionate survey, and then broke into tears. Ah! my angel, she cried, you come to offer me a physician. I already begin to feel your healing at my heart. Happy Richard, happy Richard! I have nothing further now to wish; the darling of my bowels is blessed up to my ambition, and high above my hopes. God bless you, God bless you both, my precious children! and she raised her eyes to heaven in a silently fervid ejaculation.

Again she turned to her daughter. Tell me, my love, said she, I doubt I shall confine you too much; for I feel myself already so happy in the sight of you, that I fear I shall not consent to suffer you out of my presence. O Madam, replied Angelica, when we are confined to what we delight in, we are most at freedom.

Heavenly creature, exclaimed the countess! will you bend over a little, and allow a feeble and fond mother to take you to her embraces! Angelica thereupon opening her arms with a tender passion, took my lady to her bosom, and they wept upon each other.

Next morning Lord Clinton went to settle matters at the hotel of his lady; and the earl sat in the street-parlour, lol-ling and fondly chatting, with his arm

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 43

about the bending waist of his fair daughter, when the Duke of Sully came in, unawares, upon them.

At the sight of Angelica, the duke started and went backward a few steps, Are you here then Madam, said he? Ah, I doubt it bodes nothing advantageous to my daughter: is it not so, my Lord? The Earl bowed assentingly, and looked with some confusion.

My Lord, said Angelica, rising and blushing, happily for me, my young master never saw your peerless daughter; I must else have been miserable. Not so, not so, cried the Duke, and shook his head in dissent. But, Madam, I acquiesce, I sincerely wish you happiness as near as possible to your merits; I need not wish it to your comfort, he has it in the highest. So saying, the Duke bowed to the lady and withdrew. But the Earl soon after pacified the Duke on this head, by letting him know how unworthy he should have acted by his daughter, had he imposed the husband of another woman upon her.

In the evening, Lord Clinton returned with Madam Autriche, who had been on a visit to a sick relation in the country. He introduced her to his parents. They received her with marks of distinction and

44 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

pleasure; and, that day, pressed her to come and domesticate with them: but she refused to descend from the independence of her state, though she promised, daily, to make herself a member of the family.

Madam Autriche was a chatty, pleasant, and humorous body; always in spirits, always in temper, she diffused gaiety and happiness to all around her.

To add to the general joy, my lady began to recover apace, and, in three months, was enabled to dress and be helped down stairs.

Angelica too, daily advanced in her pregnancy, and promised an approaching progeny of superior beings upon earth. All was blissful to excess. And even the countenances and delighted attention of the domestics expressed the festivity that they felt within.

But, but——I fear to proceed.---The highest happiness is transient! the shortest is closely followed by one, perhaps, of a longer, but scarce preferable date; and the longest, from its blissful commencement to its melancholy period, can barely boast I once existed, but am now no more! So nearly equal is the value of wretchedness and enjoyment, that when past and pondered together, one can scarce say

through which process they would wish to have passed.

In the midst of all their rejoicings Lord Clinton was attacked with the small-pox. Inoculation was not yet in practice. All the medical powers in Paris were called together. The physicians ordered Angelica to a remote apartment, but she would not be debarred from her attendance on her Clinton. She administered every thing to him with her own hand; and always appeared smiling and cheerful before him, but gave way to the swelling tears of apprehension and anguish when she turned away.

His body did not seem to be overcharged with the distemper; a few of the pock appeared on his face and under the left breast. When nine days were over, the doctors conceived great hopes; but, on the eleventh day, at noon, he was taken with convulsions, and, in the same hour, expired.—If human life were to be estimated by the specific contents of the temporal happiness that it sums, the lot of Lord Richard was not to be lamented.

His desolate widow, who hung over him, when she saw he had breathed his last, uttered three fearful screams, and fell over in a swoon. The malignity of the con-

46 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

tagion had also seized upon her ; but she waited not its effects ; in less than three days she expired of a broken heart : and, within two days more, my old lady hastened to join her beloved children in death.

The forlorn Earl now considered himself as standing alone upon the earth ; but he consoled himself with the tearful comfort of speedily rejoining those, who so lately had been the only ornaments of which he boasted, and the delights in which he exulted.

He had all the bodies embalmed and deposited in leaden coffins, ready for conveyance to the silent vault, where he trusted his own body should shortly be laid. But the magistracy would not suffer him to carry off the remains of lady Angelica, lest the Catholic clay of France should be profaned or polluted by an heretical sepulchre.

When he was on his departure, he took a weeping farewell of Madam Autriche, and presented her with the whole of his late daughter's deposit : but she peremptorily refused to accept of more than the half ; with which she proposed, at her country-seat, to erect a mausoleum of black marble to the memory of her Angelica.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 47

At length he set out with his sighing and silent train ; and, after a voyage, lengthened by wo, arrived finally at Enfield.

Never was seen such a concourse at any funeral, since the funeral of Jacob, on which all Egypt attended : they crowded from a distance of thirty miles round. But when they saw the old and revered patron of the country, all covered with sad and solemn weeds ; when they beheld his countenance exceeding all pomp of sorrow, and conceived the weight and wringing that was then at his heart ; envy was quite blunted, and robbed of its sting. They now lamented the living more than they mourned the dead ; and the poorest among the poor looked down, with an eye of compassion, upon the great man, now rendered, as they deemed, more pitiable and desolate even than themselves ; without child or kindred ; without any to continue his name or his honours ; without any who could claim a share in his wealth or his wo ; without any cause of further comfort, or further care upon earth.

During the following week the Earl kept his chamber, and would admit of no visitor, till Mr Meekly arrived.

Mr Meekly had long estranged himself to Enfield ; he had gone elsewhere, seeking

48 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

the houses of mourning, and breathing peace and consolation wherever he went : but as soon as he heard of the affliction of his noble friend, he hastened to help him to bear up under the weight of his calamity. He entered, and seated himself in silence beside the Earl, he there wept near an hour without uttering a syllable.

My lord was the first who spoke ; Mr Meekly, said he, my heart gratefully feels this melting proof of your love. You weep for me, my friend, because you see, and kindly feel, that there is no other comfort for me on this side the grave.

God forbid, God forbid ! said Mr Meekly ; the best and greatest of all comforts is coming to you, my lord. Eternal truth has promised it, and he will make it good to you : “ Blessed, blessed are they who “ mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

Ah, Mr Meekly, replied the Earl, the comfort that you mention is promised only to the deeply contrite and broken of heart : to those who duly lament the baseness of their offences against so great and good a God. Neither do I despair, my friend, but that I also may finally share some portion of that same comfort ; for, as I feelingly acknowledge myself the greatest of

all finners, so I wish for grace to make me the greatest of penitents.

God be praised, cried Meekly, for the grace already given! There was a time, my lord, when, as you told me, you had nothing of these divine dispositions; when the world, as you said, seemed to hold out happiness to you on either hand; when fortune, title, precedence, circling honours about you, and within you youth and health, and a revelling flow of blood and spirits, wholly disguised and concealed the state of your nature from you; when they hid from you your own body of frailty, distemper, sin, and death, and left you no occasion to call out for a Saviour, as you felt nothing from which you desired to be saved. But God has now been graciously pleased to send you his monitors, and to call upon you by affliction, that you, in your turn, may call upon him who alone can give you consolation.

It is not, my lord, to the mourners for sin alone, to whom comfort is promised: the state of suffering and mourning is in its nature extremely salutary, and of happy tendency to man; and it is therefore that the suffering Jesus hath pronounced it blessed.

The God of all love takes no delight in the sufferings of his poor and pitiable

creatures ; neither would he have made this state of our mortality a vale of tears, and a state of misery, had it not been in order to conduct us through transitory evils to ever-enduring bliss, where “ he “ himself will wipe all tears from our eyes.”

When Adam, by his apostacy and falling off from his Maker, had converted all the goods of his temporary state into evil incitements to lust, covetousness, and sensuality, God determined, by a gracious reverse, to turn all the evils of corrupt and fallen nature into means of enduring good to his fallen and frail creatures : he therefore appointed pain, affliction, distress, and disease, to be his ministers, his monitors, and preachers within us, to convince us of all the evil of our depraved and mortal nature ; to wean us from a world that is full of false promises, but empty of true enjoyment ; to remind us that we are strangers and pilgrims upon earth ; to turn our eye to the Star that hath visited us from on high ; and, finally, through our sufferings, to accomplish the great work of his own salvation in us.

Thank you, thank you, Mr Meekly, these are comforting things indeed. They pluck comfort from the very depth and abyss of affliction ; I love that my God should be lovely to my heart. You have

now rent the dark veil that long hung before my eyes; and the Sun of righteousness breaks upon me through the clouds of my mortality.---But, what of death, Mr Meekly, what of death, my friend? I am interested in the question; my time is approaching. When this body shall fall to dust, and all these organs of sensation be utterly cut off; what remains, what then shall follow? by what means shall my spirit attain the powers of new perception? or am I to lie in the grave, in a state of total insensibility, till the last trumpet shall sound? My nature shrinks, I confess, from a total deprivation of the sense of existence.

It is no way evident to me, my lord, that body, or at least such gross bodies as we now have, are necessary to the perceptions and sensibilities of our spirit. God himself is a Spirit, an all-seeing, all-hearing, all-tasting, all-smelling, all feeling, all-knowing, and all-governing Spirit. "He who made the eye, shall he not see? He who made the ear, shall he not hear?" Wherefore, as our spirits are the offsprings of his divine Spirit, we may justly presume them endowed with like capacities. But if body is necessary to the perception of spirit, as Zoroaster, the illuminated philosopher seems to intimate, where, speaking

of God, he says, "whose body is light, "and whose soul is truth;" in this case, I say, we may reasonably suppose, that when our spirits shall be parted from these gross and frail bodies, they shall be instantly clothed upon with more pure and permanent bodies. Or, as I rather think, that those pure and permanent bodies are already forming, and pregnant within our gross and corruptible bodies; and that when the midwife Death shall deliver us from the dark womb of our woe-ful travail and mortality, we shall immediately spring forth into incorruption and glory.

Of this, my lord, I am as confident as I am of my being, that he who, by faith, hath already put on Christ, shall break through death in the brightness of the body of his new birth, incorruptible, immortal, and blessed to all eternity.

Tell me then, my dearest Meekly, what mean you by the body of this new birth? for, alas, I am but too apt to cry out with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?"

I mean, my lord, the forming of Christ within us. Our being formed anew of a divine seed of our second Adam, even as our gross bodies were formed in the womb from a corruptible seed of the old Adam. I mean the clothing of our spirits of the

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 53

heavenly substantiality of the spiritual body and blood of the heavenly Jesus himself; for, as the apostle says, "There is a "spiritual body as there is a carnal body."

I mean a body the same as that in which the believing thief entered paradise with his Lord on the day of the crucifixion.

"I am the resurrection and the life," saith JESUS: "who so believeth in me, "though he were dead yet shall he live; "and he who liveth and believeth in me "shall never die:" death shall become a new and divine birth unto him. And the great apostle says, "There are celestial "bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the "glory of the celestial is one; and the "glory of the terrestrial is another." And again he says, "For we know, that if our "earthly house of this tabernacle were "dissolved, we have a building of God, "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

These are great things, indeed, Mr Meekly, and full of hope, as well as incitements to divine ambition.

But why, my lord, should a new birth from JESUS CHRIST be thought wonderful? Is there any thing more wonderful in it, than in the forming and unfolding of the whole stupendous mechanism of the body of our old man from a scarce visible

54 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

speck of eternity? Is there any thing more wonderful in it, than in the growth and unfolding of any common vegetable from some latent principle or invisable speck in the seed, which not all the optics and glasses of a Galilæo should be able to discover? Were not these the known facts of every day and hour, incredulity would have laughed the supposition to nought. But, I think, I have got about me something surprisngly analogous and apposite to the nature and manner of our new birth in JESUS.

Mr Meekly then put his hand to his pocket, and took out a lump of matter, in form like a long and huge maggot, evidently without motion, apparently without life, and hard and incruited all about to the feeling.

What have you got there, my friend, said the earl? An old worm, my lord, that at this instant, is pregnant with the birth of a new creature. Impossible, cried the earl, the thing is absolutely dead! The body of the old worm is dead, indeed, my lord; but there is certainly a principle of a new life within it, that will soon manifest itself in the birth of a very beautiful and wonderfully glorious creature. And this you will find, if you leave it for a few days, where it may get the fostering warmth of the sun through one of your

windows. Have you never seen the fly they call the Dragon-fly, my lord?

Yes, and have admired the elegance of its shape, the mechanism of its double wings, and the lustre of its irradiations.

This mass, my lord, of apparently insensible matter, is now actually pregnant with one of the same species. The parent, through whose death it is to attain life, was no other, as you see, than a vile and grovelling maggot, who once fed and took its delight in the stench and ordure of a jakes. But the new creature that is to proceed from it will be of a quite different nature and tendency: it will lothe the food and occupation of its foul progenitor; it will soar sublime over carnal and earthly things; it will drink the dews of heaven, and feed on the consummate nectar and fragrance of flowers.

This, indeed, Mr Meekly, rejoined the Earl, is to make the invisible things of God visible, even to the naked eye, by the things that are seen.

While my lord and his friend were thus deeply in discourse, Mr John, the house-steward, came in, and told his master, that one waited in the hall with a letter for him.

A letter, cried the Earl! what can I have to say, John, to any letter, or any

56 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

of the writers thereof?—But something is due to humanity, and it shall be paid; desire him to step in.

Hereupon a stranger entered, whose figure instantly caught the eyes and attention of the Earl and his companion in an astonished captivity. The youth was dressed in a mourning frock, and his dark brown locks, tied behind with a black ribband, flowed carelessly between his shoulders; while some of the front-straying curls, as in sport, alternately shaded and discovered a part of his lovely countenance. He bowed, he moved attraction; and gracefully advancing toward my lord, he again bowed, laid a letter before him on the table, and then silently retired backward a few steps.

They viewed him, they gazed on him, as it had been the sudden vision of an angel of light. Mr Meekly was not able to utter a word; neither had my lord the power to lay a finger on the paper that was directed to him; till Mr Meekly, at last, giving a great stroke on the table, cried suddenly out, I would lay a thousand pounds of it! it is he! it is he!—my heart tells me he can be no other but your Harry Clinton!

Here Harry sprung forward, and casting himself precipitately at the feet of

the Earl, he clasped his knees with an eager reverence, crying, My father, my honoured, my dear, my dear father! and broke into tears.

My Lord, all in a tremour, attempted to raise him to his arms; and Harry, perceiving this, rose and threw himself into the bosom of his father. But the Earl gently and fondly put him off a little, and gazing intently on a countenance that appeared to him lovely above all that was lovely in the circle of creation, he gathered new strength, and catching Harry to his breast, he exclaimed in a transport, "Let me die, let me die, since " I have seen thy face, my son."

Thus my Lord, in the recent acquisition of such a son, forgot all his losses, and cast the whole weight of his late calamities behind him. His eye could not be tired with seeing him, neither his ear with hearing the sweetness of his voice; and he continued to hold, to gaze at him, to caress him, unmindful of aught else, unmindful even of his friend Meekly, who sat enraptured beside him.

Will you leave me again, my child? cried out the Earl; do you intend to go from me again, my Harry? you must not, you shall not leave me, not for an hour, no, not for a minute; a second loss of my

son would quickly bring my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Never, never, my Lord, will I leave you, tenderly cried Harry; never, for a moment, will I forsake you again, my father. I come purposely to watch over, to comfort, to tend you, while I have life, with all imaginable tenderness, affection, and duty.

But where, hastily asked the Earl, where is the murderer who stabbed my peace? where is that old thief, that robber, who rent my child from me? Ah! my Lord, cried Harry, he is very far from meriting such opprobrious epithets; he is a summary of all that is excellent, all that is amiable in nature. He respects and loves you too above the world, and all that is in it deserving of love. O, had you lately seen his grief for your losses, the floods of tears he shed,—for—for—for—— Here Harry could no more; but, on the recollection of his mother and brother, burst into tears.

But tell me, my dear, continued the Earl, tell me who and what he is, whom you commend so highly?

Even the son of your own mother, my Lord; my much loved, my revered, my most honoured uncle.

Impossible, my child. That old despicable man my brother. No, no, my Harry;

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 59

he must have deceived you. My brother was all that was amiable upon earth ; “ the fairest among ten thousand,” the straightest cedar in the forest !

And such he is at this day, my Lord. But alas, alas, he has been broken by the batteries of many afflictions ; a man wholly made up of sorrows, and acquainted with killing griefs ! You wanted me not, when he took me, my father : you had other and richer treasures, comforts that were infinitely more worthy your regard. But little and despicable as I was, he had nothing but me. I became his only comfort, the only treasure in which he delighted. Yet as soon as he heard that you wanted consolation, he chose rather to be without it himself ; and so he restores me to you, if I may be any little matter of comfort to you, my father.

And where is this dear uncle, this precious brother, my Harry ? Is he come with you ? Shall I be so blessed to take him in with my eye, to take him in with my arms ; to petition, to obtain his pardon ; to press him to my bosom, to my heart, to my soul ? Where is he, where is this precious brother, my Harry ?

He is not come with me, my Lord ; he feared, as he said, that you would not

60 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

forgive him the carrying off your Gany-mede; but he is desirous of attending you on the first intimation.

Then you must write to him for that purpose to-morrow, my son; and dispatch your invitation by some of our swiftest horses. The influence of his darling will, unquestionably, be greater than that of an offending and unnatural brother. Is this letter from him, Harry?——It is my Lord.——Then, I will not peruse it, tell I get by myself. It probably contains reproaches but too well merited; or possibly matters of consolation, too tender for me to bear.——But, Mr Meekly, my dearest Meekly, ten thousand pardons!——Harry, take to your arms the man, in the world, next to your uncle, most deserving of your reverence, most deserving of your heart!

Here Mr Meekly kissed and embraced our hero, with all the tenderness of a father, and the ardour of an old friend.

Mr Meekly, cried Harry, looking earnestly and fondly at him, do I not remember something of that face, Mr Meekly? Are you not the gentleman for whom I, long since, conceived such an attachment, to whom my heart cleaved, as I may say, from my infancy?

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 61

I am, my heavenly creature, answered Meekly, I am the man indeed whose soul was knit to your's, like the soul of Jonathan to David, the first moment I beheld you, and who saw in you then all those noble, generous, and divinely humane propensities, that I see arrived to their maturity at this happy day.

While Mr Meekly was thus rejoicing, Harry happened to turn his head aside, and spying the lively portraits of my lady and Lord Richard, he started, he rose, and, gazing on them a minute, he went softly to the window, and taking out his handkerchief, kept his back to the company, while he vented his emotions in a silent passion of tears. His father and Mr Meekly perceived what he was about, but they did not disturb him. He brought fresh to their remembrance all the passages of late affliction, and they silently joined a flow of grief to his. But their tears were the tears of sympathising humanity, or rather tears of delight, on observing the sweet sensibilities of their darling.

In the mean time, Mr Frank, who attended on Harry, had whisperingly given the mourning domestics an intimation concerning the person of the stranger who had arrived, some of them well

62 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

remembered him ; and all of them had heard of him, and conceived a very kindly impression of our Harry. They first expressed their mutual joy, by kisses, embraces, and silent shakes of the hand ; but, in a little space, their congratulations became more loud and tumultuous, and the voice of exultation was heard through all the lower house.

Harry hereupon felt himself secretly hurt, and turning to his father his yet tearful countenance, My Lord, says he, I beseech you to suppress this unseasonable sound of joy among your servants, in a house that ought so justly to be the house of mourning.——My love, mildly and kindly answered the Earl, I cannot wholly refuse, to my poor and afflicted people, some share of that comfort which I myself feel on the return of my Harry. They are all my old and true servants, my child ; this is no other than an expression of their love to you and to me ; and I request you to receive them affectionately for my sake.

Here the Earl rung a bell, and desired that all his domestics should come in.

They accordingly entered. Harry perfectly recollected Mr John the steward, Mr Samuel the butler, and old Mrs Mary the cook. He called them by their names, reminded them of old times, and took

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 63

them in his arms with much affection. He then turned to the other servants. He took each of them by the hand in turns, and spoke to them, with such a natural ease and lowliness, as though he himself desired, in his father's house, to become also "as one of his hired servants." Hereupon, gathering all about him, they caught and kissed his hand by force; and then kneeling around, they promiscuously petitioned for blessings on his head; and rising, retired in a pleasing passion of sobs and tears; while the enraptured Earl beheld all, with a mixture of such blissful sensations as he had never felt before.

It now began to grow late; and after a short repast of some small matters, my Lord proposed their retiring to bed. But, my friend, said he to Harry, you must content yourself with being my prisoner for the present; you must lie in my chamber; I will not trust my lamb from my side, for fear of its going once more astray. Ah, my Lord, cried Harry, there is no fear of that; my heart is wholly your property, and you have thereby a sure hold of all that I am.

The next morning Harry impatiently rose before the servants were stirring, and unlocking the great door, and closing it

64 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

softly after him, he went out exulting on his premeditated expedition. He recognised and recollected the quondam scenes of his childhood, and flying, like a bird over the hedges, and other obstacles, he made the shortest way to his still precious mammy's.

When he approached the place of his infant endearments, he met his foster-father going forth to his field, with a solemn and melancholy air, on his usual occupations. Harry instantly remembered the features, once so delightful, and springing to him, and catching at him, he kissed and clasped him repeatedly, and cried aloud, My daddy, my dear daddy Dobson! how glad am I to see you once again! how is my mammy, my dear mammy? How is little Tommy, and little Rachel, and all our dear family?

The old man then respectfully withdrawing a space, I don't know you, my sweet master, said he; I never saw you before. Indeed, but you did; many and many a time and oft, cried Harry, you carried me in your arms, almost the live-long day, and pressed and hushed me to sleep at night in your bosom. Don't you remember your little Harry? don't you remember my two dogs? don't you remember my cock?

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 65

O, exclaimed the good old man, I now believe that you are my child, the dearest child that ever was born! But I never hoped to see him such a thing as you are; I never thought to see such a glorious creature upon earth!

Here old Dobson returned Harry's caresses with a twofold force, and, blubbering all aloud, had like to have smothered him with the intenseness of his embraces.

Bring me, bring me, cried Harry, to the sight of my dearest mammy; I am all impatient to behold her.

Not so fast, said Gaffer Dobson—I love my old loving Kate; and should she find you out of a sudden, she would certainly die of joy. But I will bring you to her as a stranger, and so you may bring matters about. And indeed I fear that my own head is likely to be crazed by this business; for I do not find that I am the same man that I was a while ago. I shall grow too proud, I doubt, and look down upon all my better neighbours.

Goodman Dobson then conducted Harry to their ancient habitation. Nurse Dobson was just up, and preparing to comb the heads of her children, when they entered.

66 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Kate, says he, I have brought to you a young stranger, who says he can give you some account of your little Harry; who says he is still alive, notwithstanding all your frights, and will shortly pay a visit to some parts of this country; and who knows then but that we, among others, may happen to set our eyes upon him, and that I think would be a great blessing, my Kate.

O, no, no, no, exclaimed nurse, without deigning to cast her eyes on the stranger; he is dead, he is gone from me these many many years! I once hoped to have his infant on my knee, and in my bosom; but that hope is quite gone. Never, never shall I behold my darling again!

Harry had seated himself just opposite to nurse, when, looking up, she started, and stared eagerly in his face. Don't impose upon me, William, says she; tell me, tell me at once, mayhap this is my child! Ah, against the world, the dimple in that smile is the dimple of my Harry.

Here Harry sprung up, and, at one leap, caught his rising nurse in his arms, crying, My mammy, my dearest mammy, do I live to be pressed once more to your dear bosom!

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 67

But the poor woman breathed short, and could not get out a word. Twenty times she put him from her, and caught him to her again, gazing at him, by intervals, with a frantic affection. At length, she cast herself back on the bench that was behind her, and, clapping her hands together, she gave a great shout, and burst into an hysterical passion of tears; while Harry seated himself beside her, and gently drawing her head to him, placed it fondly on his bosom, and mixed his tears with her's.

This gush came very seasonably for our loving nurse's relief. She soon recovered her breath and her senses; and, seeing some drops on her Harry's cheeks, she drew them in with her lips, crying, Precious pearls be these! I would not exchange one of them for the brightest diamond in the mines.

Mammy, says Harry—I stole away to come and see you, while my father was asleep, or else I should not have had leave to stir from him a foot. But you and my daddy must promise to come and dine with me; we will have a table by ourselves. And do you, my dear mammy, step to our house, and, if my father should miss me, tell him I am gone into

68 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

the town, and will be back with him before breakfast.

Harry then stepped to the village, and remembering Gaffer Truck's house, he went familiarly in, and enquired of the good woman how all the family was. Pray, how is my honest old Bartholomew, says he, and how is your pretty daughter Molly, and, above all, what is become of my old friend Tom? The poor woman, all in amazement, cried, A pretty Tom he is forsooth, to be friend to such a sweet young gentleman as you are. But the truth is, that our Tom is at prentice to a barber at next door. Well, says Harry, when Gaffer Truck comes home, tell him that his old acquaintance, Harry Clinton, called to see him.

Tom had just finished an operation on a neighbour as our hero entered. How are you Tom, said he, carelessly? Tom gaped, and stared, and gaped, but answered not a word. Will you give me a cast of your office, Tom? Ay, that I will, master, as soon as you get a beard. Why, Tom, you are grown a huge hulking fellow since I saw you last; will you step to yonder green, and wrestle one fall with me? No, no, master, I should hurt you; methinks I could throw a dozen of such fairweather gentlemen as you are, master.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 69

Harry instantly seized Tom by the breast with one hand, and by the shoulder with the other; when Tom, feeling the hardness and hurt of his gripe, immediately exerted his powers, and grappled with his adversary. But Harry, giving him a slight foot, laid him on the broad of his back in the middle of his own floor; but kept him with both hands from being hurt against the ground.

I believe, said Tom, rising, you must certainly be the devil; and come, as they say, to fling poor sinners in the shape of an angel of light. Ah, Tom, Tom, cried Harry, this is not the first struggle that you and I have had. Do you remember the bag of nuts, and poor blind Tommy? have you forgot your old friend, your little Harry Clinton?

Bless'd mercy! exclaimed Tom, can you be my young Lord, my heart's dear young master? I am indeed, answered Harry, your old acquaintance, my dear Tom, your loving friend, Harry Clinton. And so saying, he took Tom about the neck, and kissed him very cordially.

Tom, says Harry, I want you to take a walk with me; Tom instantly assented, and out they went.

As they walked along, Harry began to grow sad. Tom, sad he, do you know

76 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

where my dear brother Dicky was buried? Yes, Sir, said Tom, a great way off, in yonder church-yard below the town's end. Do you know where the sexton lives, Tom? In a little white house, Sir, just joining the yard.

As soon as they arrived, Tom called out the sexton, and Harry, putting a guinea into his hand, ordered him directly to unlock the family-vault.

The man looked astonished, but obeyed in silence; and Harry, as he entered, desired the sexton and Tom to wait at a distance, and promised to be with them by and by.

He put to the door after him, just leaving light enough to distinguish the recent deposits of the dead.

O, said he, as he advanced, thou true house of mourning, thou silent end of all men, how sad art thou to sense! how sad to me above all, who bearest in thy dark bosom such precious and beloved relics!

Then, casting himself on the coffins of my lady and lord Richard, as they lay side by side and clasping his arms about them as far as he could reach; O, he cried, my mother, my brother! my dearest brother, my dearest mother! you are gone, you are gone from me, and you never knew the love that your son and brother

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 71

had for you. Ah, how did I flatter myself, what happiness did I not propose, in attending, serving, and pleasing you; in doing thousands of tender, kindly, and endearing offices about you! but you are snatched from me, my mother, you are snatched from me, my brother! all my prospects are defeated and cut away for ever! you will no more return to me, but I shall go to you; and O that I were laid with you this minute in this still and peaceful mansion, where hopes and fears cease, and all are humble together!

Meanwhile Mr Meekly had gone abroad on his morning's walk. He met nurse on her way to the mansion-house, and, accosting her in a kind of triumph, My good nurse, says he, we have blessed tidings for you; your Harry, your hero is come to the country. I know it, Sir, I know it, answered nurse; it is but a little while ago that my babe left my bosom.

Mr Meekly then proceeded in order to join his young friend, enquiring of all he met which way Lord Harry went, till at last he was directed to the church-yard. There he found Tom and the sexton, who, on further question, silently pointed to the door of the family-vault that hung on the jar.

72 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Mr Meekly felt himself affected, and withdrew to a greater distance, but still keeping his fearful eye on the sad mansion that now held the living with the dead.

At length Harry came forth drying his cheeks with his handkerchief. He assumed a constrained air of cheerfulness; and joining Tom and the sexton, observed that a great crowd was gathering in the town.

Who are those, Tom? said he; I suppose, answered Tom, your honour's tenants and old acquaintances, who are getting together to welcome you to the country. If that is the case, Tom, we must go and salute them; and you shall introduce me, and tell me who is who: For, though my heart is heavy laden, it must not give a discharge in full to gratitude and humanity.

Mr Meekly perceiving that Harry was on his return, kept onward, aloof from him, but with an eye on his motions.

By this time the crowd had sorted themselves, the principals of the families into one groupe, the young men into another, and the fair maidens into another; and as Harry approached, they all set up a joint shout of triumph.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 73

Please your honour, says Tom, this is my father, and this is Gaffer Gubbins, and this goodman Demster, and this farmer Felster, and so on.

Harry, with the lowliness of a washer of feet, would have kissed and embraced them all in turns; but, pressing about him, they seized a hand on either side, and eagerly kissed them, as also the skirts of his cloathes all round.

God bless your sweet face! cried goodman Demster; who sees it in a morning can't fail, I think, of prospering the live-long day.

When he came, in succession, to the companions of his infancy, as he kissed and shook hands with each, in turns, some reminded him of his having beat them at boxing, others at wrestling, and all of his having played with them at prison-bars, leap-frog, shout-the-gate, and so forth.

Meanwhile, the girls panted, gazed at him, and longed to get him to themselves. Sir, says Tom, here is your old acquaintance, my sister Molly; there is not a lad in the town whom she is not able to toss except your honour. Molly looked full of health as Hebe, and rosy as the May, and Harry caught her about the neck,

and kissed her very cordially. Do you remember me, Molly? O, answered Molly, I shall never forget since your honour's Lordship and I used to wrestle every day behind our house. Ay, Molly, cried Harry, there was no harm in it then, but a fall at this day might be dangerous to one of us; above all things take care of that, my good Molly. And if you know ere a pretty lad to whom you have a liking, I will give you fifty guineas, for old acquaintance sake, toward making up your portion.

The rest of the girls now pressed for their share of Harry, and it was with difficulty that he divided himself with any satisfactory equality among them, as they all kissed him so close, and seemed so loth to part.

At length Harry's watch reminded him that it was time to attend his father, and as he parted they shouted after him, Long life, and health, and honours, to our townsman, our own boy, our own dear sweet child!

In the mean time, Mr Meekly had returned home, with his heart full of tidings to the Earl. When Harry arrived, breakfast was on table, and he perceived that his father had been in tears. But

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 75

no notice was taken of the affair at the chancel-house on either part.

When breakfast was over, Harry called in John. Mr John, says he, can you tell me how many families there are in this village of your's ? Twenty-five families exactly, my lord. Then Harry turned to his father and said, If your Lordship will be pleased to lend me five hundred guineas for the present, I will pay you very honestly the hour that my uncle comes to the country. Why, firrah, cried the Earl pleasantly, what right has your uncle to pay your debts, especially to such a great amount as you speak of ? O, my Lord, answered Harry, I have already squandered away above fifty thousand pounds of his money ; and this is but a trifle, which I am sure I may very safely add to the rest.

Here the Earl looked truly astonished. Fifty thousand pounds ! he exclaimed, impossible, Harry ! Why, you had neither such ponds or lakes as mine in London, wherein you might make ducks and drakes of them. How, in the world, could you contrive it ? Where did you dispose of them ?

In hospitals and in prisons, my father, answered Harry ; in streets and highways, among the wretched and the indi-

76 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

gent; supplying eyes to the blind, and limbs to the lame, and chearfulness to the sorrowful and broken of heart; for such was my uncle's orders.

Let me go, let me go from this place, my lord, cried Meekly; this boy will absolutely kill me if I stay any longer. He overpowers, he suffocates me with the weight of his sentiments.

Well, Harry, said the Earl, go to my desk; here is the key of the drawer on the left hand, and I make you a present of the key and the contents; perhaps you may find there nearly as much as will answer your present exigencies.

Harry went, and opening the drawer, was astonished to see it quite full of gold; however, he took no more than just the sum proposed; and, returning to his father, said, What shall I do, my lord, with that vast heap of money? Why, you extravagant rogue, replied the Earl, there is not as much in it as will pay the debt you have contracted with one man. O, cried Harry, I am quite easy upon that score; I will never affront my uncle by the offer of a penny. And don't you think, said the Earl, that we have got poor among us in the country as well as you have in the city, Harry? I believe you may have got some, my lord; but

then I am much more difficult than you may think, in the objects on whom I would chuse to confer charity. I look upon the money amassed by the wealthy to have been already extracted from the earnings of the poor; the poor farmer, the poor craftsman, the hard-handed peasant, and the day-labourer, whose seven children perhaps subsist on the milk of a couple of cows. Wherefore, the objects on whom we bestow these gatherings ought at least to be something poorer, and more worthy of compassion than those from whom the money was exacted. So saying, he stepped out.

Amazing boy! cried Mr Meekly, how new, and yet how just was that observation! I am, cried the Earl, as it were in a kind of delicious dream, and can scarce yet believe myself, so blessed as to be the father of such a child!

In the mean time, Harry had called John aside. Mr John, says he, here are five hundred guineas. Be pleased to step and distribute them by twenty guineas to each of the families in the village. I would save you the trouble, and give them myself, but that, for the present, my heart turns with disgust from their thanks and their honours. Tell them, that this is a token, in memory of my dear brother,

78 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

to keep them in mind of him. Tell them further, that I will have no carousals, no rejoicing, on account of my arrival, and that it would please me infinitely better, if my return would bring their late losses to their remembrance, and set them all in tears and lamentations.

My Lord now proposed a saunter into the park, in order to procure an appetite for dinner. Accordingly the gate was ordered to be unlocked; and they entered on a gravel-walk, that was walled in on the left hand, and paled in on the right, along the verge of five canals, that fell, successively, in cascades, the one into the other.

As they talked and walked along, they met with a fix-barred gate that directly thwarted their passage; and my Lord reached his hand through the rails for the key that the keeper had left in the lock on the inside, but he could not get at it. We are all at a full stop now, said he, unless Harry could make a shift to climb over the gate: but no, do not, my dear; your foot might happen to slip between the rails and hurt you. I will obey your Lordship, answered Harry; I will not venture a foot upon one of them. So saying, he caught at the upmost bar with his left hand, and throwing himself

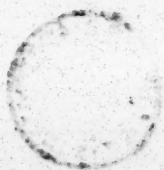
THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 79

slightly over, opened the gate for his companions. The Earl and Mr Meekly stood mute in utter astonishment. At length the Earl cried, Child, you must surely be of more than mortal mould, or else you have a familiar spirit that conveys you through the air. Harry smiled, but was silent.

On their return, John called his master aside, and told him of his due distribution of Harry's bounty to the villagers. But my Lord, says he, when I went down I found them all very busily employed, in preparing bonfires and illuminations in honour of my young Lord. This, however, I was obliged to countermand, by his special order : and it has greatly mortified all your poor people. Well, well, said the Earl, it cannot be helped for the present ; we must not dare to offend our Harry at any rate ; and so those matters of rejoicing may rest in reserve till the arrival of my brother.

Soon afterward, our hero's fosterers came, decked out in their best attire ; and Harry ordered a side-table to be covered for him and them, but my Lord insisted on their dining altogether.

Harry placed himself very lovingly between them at table, that he might help



85 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

them, and prevail upon their bashfulness to eat.

When the repast was nearly over, nurse enquired after the little beggar-boy, whose absence, she imagined, had caused the elopement of her darling. He is come to great fortune, answered Harry; he has found his father and mother, and is heir to a large estate. Harry then told the manner in which Ned had been discovered, and they were all highly pleased and affected by the relation.

But mammy, says Harry, what is become of my sister Nelly, on whose milk I was suckled? and what is become of my little brother Tommy, who was but two years younger than myself?—They are both dead, my precious; but God has been pleased to give me others in their room.—Well, mammy, I find we must all die, and some time or other that will be a great grief to one of us, whichever of us shall happen to outlive the other. I am satisfied to die once, said nurse, but never let me hear again of your dying, my angel.—I can't suffer the thought, she cried, and burst forth into tears.—I cou'dn't bear, I cou'dn't bear to die a thousand deaths in the death of my Harry!

But mammy, said Harry, in order to divert her passion, you have not yet en-

quired after the man with the beard. O the old rogue, exclaimed nurse, I can't think of him with patience. Ay, but mammy, you must know that that same old rogue is my own darling uncle, an own and only dear brother to my own dear father here. If that is the case, said nurse, I don't wonder he should so greatly yearn after you; and indeed I would rather wonder if all the world did not yearn and long after you, my love!

And now, mammy, to shew you how much you are obliged to this same darling uncle, he has ordered me to make you a present of five hundred pounds, in payment, as he says, of the grief he has cost you. And take no heed for your children, mammy, I will take that care upon myself; for this same dear uncle has made me a gift of the lands, and house, and plate, and furniture, that he has in this town, and so you see I am well able to provide for you all.

Here my Lord cast an eye of tender jealousy upon Harry; I perceive, my son, said he, that your uncle is your only trust, the only dependence that you choose to have upon earth. Harry, with a glance of his eye, instantly caught the meaning of the eye of his father; and, throwing himself at his feet, O, pardon, my Lord,

82 THE FOOL OF QUALITY:

he cried, pray, pardon the overflowings of a grateful and simple heart! My uncle is my property; but I am your's, my father, to be disposed of in life, and in death, at your pleasure. I do trust, I do depend upon you, my father; and you have already overpowered me with the weight of your affections.

My Lord's eyes then glistened, and raising his son, and taking him fondly to his bosom, I believe I have been wrong, my love, said he, and hereafter I shall always think so, rather than think any thing amiss in my Harry. But tell me, my dear, and tell me sincerely; you speak of your uncle as one of the richest and greatest men upon earth; as a prince, as an emperor, enabled to give away fortunes and provinces at pleasure.

And he is, my Lord, cried, Harry; he is greater than any prince or emperor upon earth. To speak only of his temporal wealth or power, the most inconsiderable part of his value, he can do, as I may say, what he pleases in England. The ministry are at his beck; they profess themselves his servants; and even his majesty acknowledges himself deeply his debtor, and owes him, I dare say, half a million.

And yet this is the man, exclaimed the Earl, (turning an eye of penitence on

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 83

Mr Meekly,) this is the man, as I told you, my friend, on whom I looked down with such provoking contempt ; whom I treated with such unpardonable insolence and ignominy.

My lord then enquired concerning the personal adventures of our hero in London, the account of which would have been more entertaining, had not Harry suppressed, throughout his narration, whatever he apprehended might tend to his own honour.

As soon as the fosterers had taken their leave, my lord proposed to his remaining guests a walk in the gardens ; and, after a few turns, they sat down in a rural arbour, that was interwoven all about, with jessamine and honeysuckle.

Mr Meekly, said the Earl, I have often longed to hear the particulars of your life, and how you came to live by faith, and not by fight, and to hold your conversation in heaven, as you do at this day.

I can soon obey your lordship, answered Meekly ; for my story is very short and very simple, and no way adorned with uncommon incidents.

My mother died a few hours after I was born. My father did not survive her two years ; and I fell to the care of my only kinsman, and uncle by my father's side.

84 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

My uncle was an old bachelor, and though he was of a cold temper, and had no tenderness for any one, he yet spared no cost in my education. He sent me to Eton school, and from thence to Cambridge, where I remained till I took my degrees. I then went to London, bought a sword and sword-knot, and commenced fine gentleman.

Though my head had been duly stored by my tutors in the rudiments of our religion, my heart had not yet felt any of its precepts; and I conceived, that to go regularly to church, receive the sacrament, confess myself a miserable sinner, and avoid gross vices, was the sum of Christianity. I therefore entered without scruple, into all the fashionable pleasures and vanities of the age; and I held, that, to pardon an affront, would have been one of the deadly sins in a gentleman Christian.

One day, at St James's coffee-house, Colonel Standard and another gentleman engaged at backgammon for five hundred guineas; and, as the stake was so considerable, and both parties celebrated for their skill in the game, we all crowded about them to see the issue.

I happened to be next behind the colonel's chair, and others pressed behind me,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 85

eagerly bending and looking over my shoulders. At length he began to fret, as the game was drawing to a close, and going against him. Pray, gentlemen, he would cry, don't bear upon me so; for heaven's sake keep off, you will make me lose the game. Hereupon, I did my utmost to bear back from him, but the company pressed me forward, in spite of all I could do; till the colonel, giving an unhappily decisive cast, turned about in a fury, and spit directly in my face.

Indignation gave me sudden and unusual strength, and casting all off who had borne upon me, I instantly drew my sword, and ran the colonel through the body. The company cried out that all was fair, and opening a window for me, they urged me to escape. Accordingly I got off, rode post to Dover, and there embarked for France.

The colonel, God be praised, did not die of his wound. He lay under the hands of the surgeons for above seven months, then recovered, and went to join his regiment in Flanders.

Of this my uncle sent me advice, telling me, at the same time, that I might return with safety. Yes, thought I, with safety to my life, but with death to my honour! I have taken revenge indeed,

86 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

but not satisfaction; the colonel must be compelled to make me personal reparation for the affront which he dared to put upon me. His recovery has again dashed the spittle into my face; and I will pursue him through the world, till it is wiped from the observation and remembrance of all men.

With this deadly determination I went post from Paris to Flanders, and traced the colonel from place to place, till I found him in a village on the road to Amsterdam.

I believe, Sir, said I bluntly, you may not remember me, for our acquaintance was sudden, and of very short duration; I am the man in whose face you spit publicly at St James's coffeehouse. Then, Sir, said he, I am scarce yet recovered of the cause which you gave me to bear you always in mind; but pray what may your commands be with me for the present? I am come to demand a remedy at your hands, for the wound which you gave my honour, and which otherwise must remain for ever incurable. Ah, he cried, no man ever exacted so severe a satisfaction as you have already taken; what then may be the nature of the further reparation that you are pleased to

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 87

require? Either to ask my pardon, or fight me within this hour.

That is very hard upon me, indeed, replied the colonel; the honour of my commission will not allow me to beg pardon of any man, at least in order to avoid a combat; so, Sir, if you insist upon it, I must obey your summons, though very reluctantly, I confess. Then, Sir, said I, meet me in half an hour, with your pistols and sword, behind yonder little hill.

The colonel was punctual to the appointment. We both grasped a pistol, at a distance of twenty paces, and advancing, step by step, cried, Fire! fire! Each seemed determined to make sure of his adversary; till, coming within arm's length, I fired directly in his face, but the ball passed through his hat, and only grazed the skin of his left temple.

The colonel then took his pistol into his left hand, and reaching out his right to me, with a smile of great complacence, I think, Sir, said he, I may now ask your pardon with honour. And to convince you that I did not come to engage you in malice, be pleased to examine my arms, you will not find so much as a grain of powder in the one or the other.

Ah, colonel, I then exclaimed, I acknowledge you my conqueror both in he-

nour and humanity. Had I been so unhappy as to kill you, and to find your arms unloaded, I should certainly have done you justice, by shooting myself through the head. But why did I pursue you from kingdom to kingdom? why was I unappeased by all the blood that I shed? Was it from any malignity of heart toward you? by no means. But while I lamented the misery I had already occasioned you, I was impelled to finish your destruction, by a barbarian world, or rather, by the bloody prescribers of custom, whose censure I dreaded worse than death, or even futurity. Courage, Colonel, incites soldiers to fight for their country, but it is cowardice alone that drives duellists together.

For three affectionate days, I remained with my late enemy, but now warm friend. He then was obliged to return to quarters; and we parted with a regret much exceeding the hostility with which we had met.

On the departure of the Colonel, I went to Amsterdam, from whence I drew upon my uncle to the amount of 700 l.; for I resolved to take a tour through the Seven Provinces, though I had gone for a very different purpose.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 89

On my return to Amsterdam, I grew affected one evening, in a manner I had never before experienced. I did not feel myself any way sick or in pain, and yet I wished to exchange my sensations for any other species of malady. I was wholly pervaded by a gloomy despondence. I looked abroad for comfort, but it was no where to be found; every object gave disgust to my discontented imagination. I secretly enquired of my soul, if riches, honours, dignities, if the empire of the world, would restore her to joy? but she turned from them, and said, All these things are strangers, and aliens to my peace. Alas, said I, tell me then where your peace may be found? I know not, she replied, but I feel that I am wretched.

For three days I continued under this oppression of spirit; and on the third night an increasing horror, of deep and heavy darkness, fell upon me. All hope died within me, and misery seemed to open a gulph of ever-deepening destruction in my soul. I lay all night, bathed in drops of unutterable anguish. I wished and struggled to arise and change my situation; but I felt that my mind was its own place, and its own hell, from

whence there was no removal, no possible escape.

I now concluded, that some how I must have sinned beyond the measure of all sinners, since my damnation was deeper than that of any other. I therefore turned toward God, and wished to repent; but as I did not feel conviction for the sins of which I accused myself, no place for repentance was found in my soul.

Tremendous author! I cried, I find that thou canst sink and slay at pleasure; but canst thou not also raise up and make alive? If all things have their existence in thee, O God! is it not near, and easy unto thee to impart to us some sensation of thine own existence also? some sensation of thine own peace, the sense that it is thou alone who canst be our sustainer? Save me, Jesus, save me from the hell of mine own nature! Save me, thou Son of David, O save me from myself!

While I thus prayed in an agony, my whole frame was suddenly overpowered, and sunk, as I suppose, into a state of insensibility, till the following day was far advanced. At length I perceived that I still existed.

I dreamed that I found myself in a deep and noisome dungeon, without a

single ray that might even suffice to shew me the horrors of my situation. I attempted to rise and grope about; but I perceived that I was tied and fastened down to earth, by a number and variety of bands and fetters.

At length a sudden light appeared, and diffused itself throughout the darkness of my mansion; when, looking up, I observed that the keeper of my prison had entered, the doors being yet locked. His head, as I thought, was bound about with a tiara, from whence the glory arose that shone around me. In the coronet, instead of gems, were inserted a number of thorns, whose points streamed with incessant and insufferable brightness; and on the golden circlet was engraved, in all languages, JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS.

Immediately my shackles loosened and fell away of themselves, and I wished to cast my whole existence under the feet of my Lord, but was so overcome with ecstasy, that I could not rise; when, looking upon me with a smile of ineffable graciousness, he approached and took me by the hand, and, at the contact, I sprung up a great height in my bed, and awoke to sensations of indescribable blessedness.

You are come, then, my Lord, my salvation; you are come, my Master, I cried, and I will cling inseparably to you; never, O never more will I suffer you to depart. Ah, I have felt, severely felt what it is to be without you. For in your absence, though but for a moment, lies the essence of hell and misery; but, in your presence, my beloved, in your presence is peace unspeakable, and joy for evermore.

From that day, my nature became, as it were, wholly inverted. All the honours and worldly respects, for which I formerly risked my life, were now my aversion; and I turned from carnal indulgence and sensuality with loathing.

Nothing could now affront, nothing could now offend me: as I totally despised myself, so I wished, after the process of my divine Master, to be despised and rejected of men. This made all others, the very meanest of human creatures, respectable unto me. Even in reprobates, methought I discerned some uneras'd traces, of the image and superscription of my God, and I bowed down before it.

If any attempted to injure, or defraud me of my property, I yielded it without variance, and thereby I found myself cordially enriched.

I grew weary of my own will, and of my own liberty, and I earnestly prayed my Lord that he would rid me of them, and be instead thereof, a controlling principle within me, ever influencing and directing me according to his own pleasure. Turn me, JESUS, Master! O turn me, I cried, from all the evil propensities of my own evil nature, though thou shouldest turn me, as thou didst Sennacherib, with thy ruling rein on my neck, thy bridle in my mouth, and thy hook in my nose! Take my heart and affections captive, and into thine own divine guidance! Compel me into all the ways and all the works of thy commandments; till thy yoke shall become easy, and thy burden light and delightful; till I shall move, as down a descent, where-ever thy goodness would guide me; till I shall feelingly find and know, that all thy ways are ways of pleasantness, and all thy paths the paths of peace!

This, my lord, may look somewhat like boasting; but it boasteth of nought, excepting CHRIST crucified, or rather arisen in me, whereby all worldly matters are crucified unto me.

Within about a fortnight after my conversion, I received a letter from a friend in London, informing me that my old un-

cle had secretly married a young creature who was lately delivered of a son; that he now openly acknowledged her for his wife, and that this, as he feared, did not bode me any good.

At another time these tidings would have greatly alarmed me; but I was now equally resigned, and indifferent to all events.

In a few days after, as I was stepping out of my lodgings, I was arrested in the name, and at the suit of my uncle, for 700*l.* the precise sum for which I had drawn upon him about nine months before. All the consequences of this caption immediately occurred to me. I perceived that my uncle intended to deprive me of my patrimony in favour of his new family; and, as I had no means for opposing his machinations, save what lay in his own hands I concluded that a jail was to be my portion for life. Wherefore, I lifted up my heart, and said within myself, To prisons and to death give me chearfully to follow thee, O thou who, in death, art the life and resurrection!

My spirit had no sooner uttered this short ejaculation, than I felt such a weight of peace descending upon me, that my heart leaped within me at the prospect of

suffering, and I would not have exchanged my prison for a throne.

While I quietly walked with the officers toward the place of my durance, they came to a great tavern, where they entered, and proposed to regale themselves at my expence.

Mean time, a Dutch merchant of great eminence happened to be with his lady in the principal room, and hearing a bustle in the house, he enquired the cause, and sent for the chief bailiff.

Soon after I was conducted into their presence. They both rose as I entered; and the gentleman, approaching, took me familiarly by the hand, and said in Dutch, Mr Meekly, I hear you are in distress, and that is sufficient to recommend you to my services; but your appearance exacts something more from my inclinations. Pray let me know wherein, and how far it may be requisite for you to command me.

I muttered somewhat, as I suppose, inarticulately toward an answer. For I protest, my lord, I was so struck, so awed, so confounded, by his presence, that I was lost for the time, to the consideration of my own affairs. Meanwhile he placed me at table just opposite to the heavenly vision of his bride, and then went and re-

fumed his seat beside her; while I gazing in silence and utmost wonder, recollected those lines of Milton, where, speaking of Adam and Eve, he calls them

“ the loveliest pair
 “ That ever since in love’s embraces met;
 “ Adam, the goodliest man of men since born
 “ His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.”

The gentleman perceived my astonishment, and graciously smiling, again asked me what sum was requisite to extricate me from my present difficulty. Ah, Sir, said I, it is a sum that far exceeds all human bounty; and, indeed, I would not accept the obligation from any man, unless I were assured of being shortly in a capacity to reimburse him, of which I see no likelihood, I think no possibility.

Here I told him, in few words, how my father had left me an infant at the disposal of my uncle, who had now put me under arrest for 700*l.* which, some time since, he had freely remitted to me, as in my own right.

I see, said the gentleman, your uncle is a villain, and means, by casting you into a prison, in a strange and distant place, to deprive you of the power of bringing him to account. But he must be detected; it

is a justice which you owe to the public, as well as yourself. And as the amount of the pretended debt is not sufficient for that purpose, here is an order on the bank in town for double the sum. For this you must give me your note of hand. Be pleased to reimburse me when it is your convenience. If that should never happen, be under no concern; for I hold myself already repaid with usury, in the opportunity of serving an injured and a worthy man.

O Sir, I cried, I cannot, indeed I cannot, I will not accept it on any account. I am patient, nay I am pleased with the lot that is appointed me. Shall I, in an instant, break the yoke, and cast the burden which my gracious Master, but this instant, has laid upon me? No, Sir, I submit myself to it with thankfulness; I take this cross to my bosom, and press it to my heart.

O Meekly, said he, you are a very misdeeming Christian, if you think yourself entitled either to assume or retain your proper crosses at will. There is too much of self-righteousness in such a zeal, Meekly. Humility would rather bid the will of our Master to be done; and he offers you enfranchisement by my hand. Do, my dear Sir, cried the angel beside him, do; let me petition, let me persuade you to ac-

cept this little instance of our good will to so good a creature. Though my Lord here has not been able to prevail, a lady has superior claims, and I must not be refused.

Quite sunk, quite overwhelmed, I dropped involuntarily on my knees before them. Blessed pair, I exclaimed, blessed and beauteous beyond expression! if angels are like you, what happiness must be in heaven! I could no more, my words were choked by my rising emotions.

My benefactor then rose, and coming tenderly towards me, he took me warmly in his arms. My Meekly, says he, do not oppress me, I pray you, by this excess of acknowledgment; I am but a worthless instrument in the hands of our Beloved; for from him, and him alone, is every good gift, and even the will of the giver. O, Mr Meekly, added the lady, her eyes glittering through water, we thank you, we cordially thank you, Mr Meekly; you have occasioned us much pleasure this day, I assure you; and the means of our happiness should be delightful in our eyes.

My patron then rung a bell, and ordered his principal gentleman into his presence; when, putting the order into his hand, Here, says he, take this, with the bailiff, directly to the bank; there pay

him his demand of 700 *l.* and fees ; and bring me a hundred pounds in cash, and the remainder in bills on London. Then, calling for pen and ink, he drew the following short note, " I owe you fourteen hundred pounds ;" to which I signed, Charles Meekly.

On the return of the messenger, I was put in possession of the cash and bills, and a dinner of little elegancies was served up.

After a short repast, the decanters and glasses being placed, and the attendants dismissed, my two patrons gave a loose to social joy, and invited me to be a partaker in their festivity. Never was I, nor ever shall I again, be witness to such flights of fancy, such a spontaneous fluency of heart-springing glee ! With what pleasure did erudition cast off its formal garb ! how delightfully did wisdom assume the semblance, and, at times, the very phrase of childhood ! they laughed, they rallied me, themselves, and the world. Their merriment was as the breaking forth and exuberance of overflowing innocence and virtue. Conceive to yourself, my Lord, a large room surrounded with benches, whereon are seated the principal philosophers, literati, lawyers, statesmen, chief captains, and chief conquerors, in all ages ;

then think you behold two sportively observant children in the midst, looking and laughing at the insignificance of the several sages; taking off and holding up the solemnity and self-importance of each profession in caricature; and setting the whole world, with all its wisdom, its toils, and boasted acquirements, its solitudes, applications, and achievements, at nought.

The gentleman, indeed, pretended, and only pretended, to defend the sophists, the valiant, and the renowned of his sex; but he evidently exulted in his own defeat; while the lady, with a drollery amazingly voluble, ran through the schools of philosophy, the systems of human policy, and histories of heroism, unpluming the crested, bringing the lofty low, and depreciating and reducing all magnitude to miniature. And all this she did with an archness of such pleasant meaning; with such looks, eyes, and attitudes of bewitching transition, as would have infused fascination into old age and ugliness; what then must it have done when accompanied by a beauty that scarce ever was equalled, that could not be exceeded? Did the Sarah of the patriarch Abraham resemble her, I wonder not that nations

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 101

should have been enamoured of her at the age of fourscore.

At length the enraptured husband, no longer able to contain, bent toward her with looks of soul-darting delight; and, restraining his arms that would have crushed her to his bosom, O my Louisa, he cried, you are too much, too pearly, too precious a treasure for me! But giving him a sweetly petulant pat on the cheek, Away, you rogue, she said, I'll none of your mockeries!

What can expression add further to this divinely pre-eminent of human creatures? Whatever was her present glance, aspect, or posture, you would have wished to fix her in it, that you might gaze and admire for ever: but when she varied the enchantment of her action and attitude, you forgot the former attractions; and she became as it were a newness of ever-rising delight!

Alas, how transient, how momentary was the bliss I then enjoyed! A chariot and six pied horses drove up to the door, attended by a retinue of ten or twelve men, all armed, gallantly mounted, and in rich apparel.

My dear Meekly, mournfully said my benefactor, I am sorry that we are destined to different departments. I lodge to-night

at a villa belonging to one of my correspondents, and to-morrow we set out to visit some of the German courts. Fare, fare you well, Meekly, for a short season at least!

I would have cast myself at his feet. It was an emotion, a propensity which I could not resist; but he prevented me, by kissing and casting his arms affectionately about me. The lady then turned to me, and, with a smile of heart-captivating graciousness, God be with you, God be with you, my good Mr Meekly, she cried! perhaps we may meet ere long in your own England. I answered not; but bending on one knee, I caught her hand, pressed it fervently to my lips, and permitted her to depart.

Alas, they did depart. I saw them for the last time. They mounted their carriage, and being seated, they bent forward, and, bowing to me with a fixed regard, off they drove, and tore away with them, as I thought, the best part of my soul.

I followed them with straining eyes: when out of sight, methought I held them still in view; and I blessed and kissed, in imagination, the very ground over which they went. At length I awoke from my delirium, and with slow and heavy steps turned back into the house.

I had not yet, through shame, so much as enquired the name of my benefactor. I therefore called to my host, in order to inform myself of all that I could learn concerning him; as also to make out a bill, for it had not been called for, and I pleased myself with the thought of discharging a reckoning that my friends had forgotten. When I questioned my host on this head, he put his hands to his sides, and broke into a violent fit of laughter; No, no, master, said he, there's nothing for any one to pay in this house, I assure you: mynheer never troubles himself about those matters, his major domo pays all; ay, and for every guest too that happens to be in the same inn with his master.

Why pray, said I, is he a lord? A lord, quotha; not so little as that comes to neither—No, Sir, he is a prince, the very prince of our merchants; and our merchants are princes above all lords. And pray how do they stile or call him? He has many names and titles; when our traders speak of him, they call him mynheer Van Glunthong; but others stile him my lord of merchants, and others, my lord the brother-man, and my lord the friend of the poor.

The remainder of my story is very short, and still more insignificant. I soon

set out for England, in order to file a bill against my uncle, and compel him to discover what patrimony my father had left me. But God was pleased, in the mean space, to cut off all debate; his wife and child had died of an epidemic distemper, and he did not survive them above a fortnight. He left me a penitential letter, with a small will inclosed, whereby I became entitled to three hundred a year in right of my father, and an additional four hundred in right of my uncle, with a sum of near three thousand pounds in ready money.

If I know my own heart, the only cause of rejoicing that I felt on that occasion was, that it put it in my power to discharge my pecuniary obligations to my late generous preserver. I immediately wrote, and transmitted bills to Holland for the purpose; but the bills were returned, and I could hear no tidings concerning the residence of my patron. I then put out his 1400*l.* on the best securities that I could procure. It is now close upon five-and-thirty years since I saw him; and, in that time, the principal, with interest upon interest, yearly turned into capital, has amounted to nearly five thousand pounds, one penny of which I never touch, but hold the whole as sacred.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 105

Meantime, it has cost me hundreds upon hundreds in correspondences, advertisements, and even in special messengers to several parts of Europe, to discover where this greatest, this most eminent of men could have concealed himself; but, alas, my search proved as fruitless as that of the miser in hunting after the pearl of mighty price!

During these five-and-thirty years the image of the persons of those my two gracious patrons never left my memory, were ever at my heart. Ah! I would say to myself, they are dead, they are dead; or rapt, perhaps, like Elijah, alive into heaven: flesh and blood, refined as theirs, might easily pass from its little impurities, through the fire of the love of God, to the place of its bliss. And again, it was my daily and ardent petition, that, if their mortal was not swallowed up of immortality, I might once set my eyes upon them before I died.

Here Mr Meekly ended—I thank you, my dear friend, said the Earl, for your history; it has entertained me most pleasingly, and I have also been highly edified by some passages in it. But with respect to the glimpse that you had of your two wonderful friends, I think it must have been a vision, or merely a matter of

imagination; for I never saw in nature, nor read in fiction, of any thing comparable to the excellencies that you have described in that exalted pair. If it was a vision, my lord, it must have been one of blessed angels indeed; but I hope you will allow, that the benefits which they conferred were no way visionary. O, Mr Meekly, said Harry with a sigh, the picture that you have drawn of this dear lady has almost given me a distaste to all the rest of her sex. Ah, might I meet hereafter some daughter, some descendant, some distant likeness of her, how happy should I think myself! May heaven succeed your ominous wish, my dearest child, cried Meekly! It is just, perhaps prophetic, that it should be so: For never did I see so perfect a resemblance between any two creatures, as between the consort of that bewitching woman and yourself: it struck me, the other night, the moment, you entered the room, and I thought that I beheld my very benefactor newly arisen, like a new phoenix, from the ashes of old age.

Near a fortnight now elapsed, without any news or notice from Mr Clinton, or from the messenger who was sent dispatch from him. Harry daily advanced in the favour and familiarity of his father, and Mr

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 107

Meekly continued with him in a most pleasing society.

On a fine morning, as they were walking together toward the village, This is the first time, my Harry, said the Earl with a sigh, that I have ventured to turn my face this way since the death of my wife, and the interment of your dear brother. O my lord, cried Harry, I would gladly exchange my lot in life with the meanest of yonder cottagers, who earns his daily bread by the labour of his hands, provided I might thereby restore them both to your bosom. Not so, not so, my son, fervently replied the Earl; I would not lose my Harry, tho' I were thereby to resuscitate all that are dead in England. I have no cause, no manner of right to complain; I am still happy, wonderfully happy, too happy in the possession of such a child!

Just then, a great shouting and uproar was heard in the village. The huge mastiff, belonging to Peregrine Pelt the tanner, had run mad, and came foaming up the road, pursued by thirty of the townsmen, armed with staves, spits, and pitchforks. The dog rushed on at such a rate, that there was no possibility for our company to escape him; and Harry, observing that he made directly toward

his father, threw himself full in his way. Instantly the invenomed monster sprung up and cast himself open mouth upon our hero; but Harry, with a wonderful presence of mind, having wrapped his left arm in the skirt of his coat dashed it into the frothing jaws of the terrible animal: when giving a trip, at the same time, to his hinder legs, he threw him flat on the ground, and, springing up into the air, he descended upon him with all the force of his heels, and dashed his bowels to pieces; whereupon the creature uttered a faint howl, sprawled a while, and expired.

The Earl and Mr Meekly stood yet a-while, pale, astonished, and unassured; and my lord looking about in a panic, cried, Where is the dog? What's become of the mad dog? In the mean time the villagers came on in full pursuit, crying out, The maddog,—The mad dog,—Take care of the mad dog! But when they all arrived, and beheld their huge enemy looking formidable even in death, never was amazement equal to theirs. They stared at the Earl, Meekly, and Harry, in turns; and seeing no weapon in any of their hands, God, cried goodman Demster, God has been wonderfully gracious in your deliverance, my lord; for nothing

less than a thunderbolt could so suddenly have stricken this monster dead. I protest, said the Earl, I was so much alarmed that I know not how it happened; I remember nothing further than that my dear child, here, thrust himself between his father and danger. But I beheld, said Meekly, when with one stroke of his arm he dashed the creature to the ground, and then instantly crushed him to death with his feet. Not I, Mr Meekly, modestly replied Harry; God gave me strength, for the season, in defence of my father. But are you not bit, are you not hurt, my child? cried the Earl, coming up tremblingly to his son. Not touched, indeed, my lord. Glory for that in the highest! exultingly cried the Earl!

I knew, exclaimed Tom Truck, with a shout and look of triumph, I knew it could be no other but my brave and noble young master who did the feat. On my life, cried farmer Felster, he is able, with his naked arm, like another young David, to save his lambs from the jaws of the lion and the paws of the bear.

Though these praises served only to put our hero to confusion, they went trickling, like balm of Gilead, to the heart of his father. Pelt, said the Earl, let it be your task to flea and tan me the hide of your

own dog. I will have his skin stuffed with incense, and his nails of solid gold; and he shall hang up in my hall, from generation to generation, to commemorate the piety and prowess of my son! Meanwhile, my good friends, I invite you all, with your families, kinsfolk, and neighbours, to come and feast with me this day. Sorrow hath endured her night; but joy cometh with my child, and ariseth on us as a new morning.

In the afternoon, all the town's folk and neighbours, with their wives and children, convened to the great house, having their cattle and themselves heavy laden with faggots, for a magnificent illumination. The whole court was spread with tables, and the tables with victuals and liquors; besides two hogheads of October that stood apart.

The Earl, in the joy for his own escape, and the recent prowess of his young hero, went forth with a cheerful countenance, and graciously welcomed all his guests; whereas they wished health and long life to his lordship and their young lord, and giving a joint huzza, sat down to their banquet. From whence, after a night far spent in carousal, their great fire being out, and their great hogheads exhausted, they peacefully helped each other to their

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 111

respective homes; regretting, however, that they had not been honoured with the presence of their young master among them. For Harry had besought his father to dispense with him yet a-while, from partaking in any party or scene of festivity, especially when appointed in his own honour; and Mr Meekly highly approved and applauded his motion.

On the eve of the following day, Mr Meekly rode abroad on a charitable visit to a dying man in the neighbourhood; and my lord was fondly toying and patting the cheek of his darling, as they stood at the hall-door; when Harry spied a mourning coach turning up the lower end of the great avenue, and instantly cried out, 'There's my uncle! my lord; my uncle, my dearest uncle! and off he shot like lightning. The coach drove but slowly; Harry was up with it in a twinkling; and vaulting in at the window, was, in the instant, in the bosom of his best friend and patron.

In the mean time, the Earl had retired into the house in great agitation. He feared and was jealous of the manner in which his brother would meet him; and this gave him equal doubt and hesitation respecting the manner in which he ought to receive his brother. Mr Clinton, on

the other hand, was not wholly without some similar emotions ; so that, when Harry introduced his uncle into the parlour, no two noble personages could salute each other with a more distant respect.

The Earl, however, on casting a glance upon the face of his brother, felt a tide of returning affection, and lifting up his hands and eyes, exclaimed, It is he, it is he ! my Harry, my Harry Clinton ! my dear, my long lost, my long sought brother ! then hastened forward in a gush of passion, and caught him in his eager arms ; when Mr Clinton, alternately folding the Earl to his bosom, cried, I am content, O my God ! give me now to depart in peace, since at last, I find, and feel, that I have indeed a brother !

Our hero, observing the violence of their emotion, interposed with a gentle care, and supporting them to seats, placed them tenderly by each other.

For a while they both sat silent, with a handkerchief at their eyes ; till the Earl turned, and plaintively said, You do not forgive me, Harry Clinton ; you never will, you never can forgive me, my brother ! whereupon, Mr Clinton caught up the Earl's hand to his lips, and, pressing it with a fervent respect, cried, My brother and my lord, my brother and my lord !

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 113

O then, said the Earl, you do forgive me, I find ; but, never can I, never will I forgive myself ! My faults towards you, my noblest brother, for these many long years, have been ever before me ; my neglects, my pride and insolence, my contemptuous treatment of one so highly my superior ; of my Harry, the only boast and glory of our house.

Meanwhile, our hero stood aloof, with his head averted, weeping and sobbing with evident agitation ; till Mr Clinton cried, No more, my brother, no more, I beseech you ! It is already too much ; I cannot bear my present excess of grateful affection for you ; it struggles to rush forth, but utterance is not given. Beside, we shall break the heart of our dear child there ; his nature is too tender to support such a scene as this.

Harry then smilingly turned his face toward his parents, all shining through tears, as the sun in a shower ; and advancing, and kneeling before them, as they sat, he took the hands of each alternately, and pressed them in silence to his lips.

In about an hour after, while their affections were still at the highest, but their spirits somewhat composed, Mr Meekly returned. The Earl immediately rose,

and advancing, took him by the hand with a cordial familiarity. Mr Meekly, says he, I shall now have the pleasure of introducing you to that inestimable brother, of whom you have heard me speak so often. Brother, this is Mr Meekly, my best and worthiest friend!

Mr Clinton rose and advanced; and Meekly approached with an abased reverence, not venturing to look up, but saluted him, as he would have saluted an angel of light!

Meekly, Meekly, cried Mr Clinton, I have surely heard that name before! Pray, Mr Meekly, were you ever abroad? have you travelled, Sir? were you ever in Holland, Mr Meekly?

Here Meekly started, as awaked by the sound of a voice, whose recollected tunings went thrilling to his heart; and lifting up his eyes, and beholding the traces of features, once so lovely, and ever deeply endeared to his memory, he started, and staggering back some steps, he sunk down on a chair behind him almost in a fainting fit.

The Earl greatly alarmed, went up, and taking him by the hand, What is the matter, my friend, says he? are you taken suddenly ill? are you not well, my Meekly?

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 115

O, my lord—he pantingly cried—there he is—as sure as I live——my patron——my benefactor——the wondrous man that I told you of——there he stands, in his own precious person before us !

Mr Clinton then approached, and, taking a seat beside him, leaned toward him with a melting complacence. Mr Meekly, said he, I expected ere this to have embraced you in heaven ; but I rejoice to meet you even on earth ; for I have ever retained a very affectionate impression of you ; and I more especially rejoice to meet you in the present society.

But then——but then you come alone——you come alone, my lord and master!——Alas, you wipe your eye!——O then, it must be so !——And here he broke into a passionate gush of tears.

My lord and our hero, hereupon, recollecting the engaging circumstances of a character, of whose description they had been so lately enamoured, could not refuse their tribute to the memory of that admirable lady, to whose person they now found themselves endearingly attached by affinity.

At length Mr Clinton, distressed to the last degree for the distress in which he saw the forlorn Meekly, sweetly turned

from his own affliction to the consoling of that friend whom he found so deeply afflicted for him.

Mr Meekly, said he, let us not weep for the living, but rather for the dead ; for those who are yet in the vale of mortality ! Shall we mourn the condition of angels ? Shall we lament that a weight of glory is fallen on those whom we loved ? No, let us rather rejoice in the prospect of being speedily partakers !

When supper was over, Harry laid hold of the first interval of converse, to enquire after his friends in town, more especially Mr Clement, his Arabella, and their little Dicky. They are come, said Mr Clinton, to sudden and great affluence. Old Clement is thoroughly reconciled to his son, and is doatingly fond of Arabella and her child. I am glad of it with all my heart, cried Harry, clapping his hands ; but pray how did this matter come about, Sir ? By an event, my dear, in which the arm of Providence was signally visible. Old Clement's supposed wife was detected, and is dead ; as is also her paramour, the villain who betrayed, and lately also attempted to murder your Hammel. His history is wonderful ; but it is long, and too horrid to relate.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 117

What an astonishing distance there is, exclaimed the Earl, between the characters and dispositions of man and man! And how does my brother, my revered Harry Clinton, rise supreme above all his species, in every excellence, in every virtue, scarce less than divine!

O, my Lord, I am persuaded, said Mr Clinton, that, could it please God, at this instant, to withdraw from me the influence of his holy and happy Spirit, I should become altogether as evil as the worst, as vile as the vilest.

I cannot think so, my brother, replied the Earl; you would still continue a rational and free creature. There is certainly a distinction in the nature of things! There is the beautiful and deformed, the amiable and detestable; your judgment would approve the one, and reject the other; and your freedom of agency would act conformable to your election.

Ah, my Lord, cried Mr Clinton, what things, what beauty, what amiableness, what freedom is this that you speak of? Have you found out another universe, or another deity beside HIM in whom our life subsists? Are there any things in nature, save the things of our God? Or what beauty or amiableness can they possibly exhibit, save what they derive from

118 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

him; save some quality or impregnation, some manifestation or impression of his own beauty or amiableness?

To make this matter clear, let us go somewhat deeper: quite back, if you please, my Lord, to the very birth of things.

Throughout nature we find that God can impart to his creatures, a being, an identity, a fire of life, an intelligence or sagacity, a consciousness, a force or action, a will, and a freedom, distinct from himself, and distinct from each other: and this is the utmost extent of creaturely nature, whether respecting the powers that are in hell or in heaven; whether respecting the highest seraphims that are in bliss, or the lowest fallen spirits in perdition.

Now all these powers or high prerogatives, altho' distinct from God, are infinitely far from being independent of him; for he will not, he cannot depart from his supremacy. nor that universality of essence, by and in which alone all essences subsist. He can, indeed, impart the forementioned powers, to any limited degree that he pleases; but then, in their highest degree of fire, life, or sagacity, force, action, or freedom, you will perceive, on the slightest reflection, that there is nothing of the beautiful or amiable, that you spoke of; but that they are equally

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 119

applicable, and may be equally exercised to evil, or good purposes, according to the nature or disposition of the agent.

I have already specified the many great and wonderful powers that God can impart to his creatures, distinctly, though not independently, from himself. But there is one power, one quality which God cannot make creaturely ; which, with all his omnipotence, he cannot possibly impart, in any kind of distinction or separability from himself ; and this quality is called **GOODNESS**.

And now, my dear Lord, in order to convince you of this most capital and most important of all truths, a truth upon which time, eternity, and the universe all turn, as on their axis, it may be necessary to inquire what **GOODNESS** is.

There is no species of allowed or conceivable virtue, that is not reducible under the standard of their great leader, and all-generating Parent, called **LOVE**. **GOOD WILL** is the eternal bleaser of all to whom it is beneficent, and also generates its own blessing in the very act of its love.

Here lies the great and impassible gulph between God and his productions, between the creature and the Creator. The will of God is an eternal **FIRE OF LOVE** to-

ward his creatures, and goes forth in blessings upon them as wide and universal as his own existence. But the will of the creature is confined and limited like its essence. While it is distinct from, or uninformed by the will of God, it cannot possibly act beyond or out of itself; it cannot possibly feel for any thing except itself; it cannot wish any welfare except its own welfare, and this it endeavours to compass by the exertion of all its powers.

From this distinct, selfish, and craving will of the creature, springs every possible evil, whether natural or moral. From the preference of its own identity to that of others, ariseth pride; from the eagerness of its grasping at all advantages to itself, ariseth the envy of any imaginary advantage to another. Pride, covetousness, and envy, beget hatred, wrath, and contention, with every species and degree of malevolence and malignity; and the disappointment of these passions produces rancour and misery; and, all together, they constitute the whole nature and kingdom of hell itself in the soul.

But when God is pleased to inform the will of the creature with any measure of his own benign and benevolent will, he steals it sweetly forth in affection to others; he speaks peace to the storm of rending

passions ; and a new and delightful dawning arises on the spirit. And thus, on the grand and final consummation, when every will shall be subdued to THE WILL OF GOOD TO ALL, our JESUS will take in hand the resigned cordage of our hearts ; he will tune them, with so many instruments, to the song of his own sentiments, and will touch them with the finger of his own divine feelings. Then shall the wisdom, the might, and the goodness of our God, become the wisdom, might, and goodness of all his intelligent creatures ; the happiness of each shall multiply and overflow in the wishes and participation of the happiness of all ; the universe shall begin to sound with the song of congratulation ; and all voices shall break forth in an eternal hallelujah of praise, transcending praise, and glory, transcending glory to GOD AND THE LAMB !

Purblind reason, here, will say, even the goodness of God himself, in the human heart, will say, If our God is all Love, if he is a will to all rectitude and happiness in his creatures, why did he suffer any evil to begin in nature and creature ? Could evil have risen contrary to the will of Omnipotence, if Omnipotence had willed that it should not arise ?

Ah, my friends, no evil ever did, nor ever can approach the will of God ; neither can he will or effect any species of evil in nature or creature ; but he can allow a temporary evil in the creature, as a travail toward its birth into the more eminent degree of that goodness and happiness which God effects. God cannot effect or take delight in the sufferings of the most abandoned reprobate that ever blasphemed his name ; but he can will, that the sinner should be reclaimed to happiness, even by suffering, when there are no other means in nature whereby he may be reclaimed.

Could creatures, without the experience of any lapse or evil, have been made duly sensible of the darkness and dependence of their creaturely nature, and of the distance and distinction between themselves and their God ; could they have known the nature and extent of his attributes with the infinity of his love ; could they have known the dreadful consequences of falling off from him, without seeing any example, or experiencing any consequences of such a fall ; could they have otherwise felt and found, that every act of creaturely will, and every attempt at creaturely power, was

a forsaking of that eternal wisdom and strength in which they stood; could all intelligent creatures have been continued in that lowliness, that resignation, that gratitude of burning affection which the slain will of the mortified sinner feels, when called up into the grace and enjoyment of his God; could those endearing relations have subsisted in creation, which have since newly risen between God and his lapsed creatures, wholly subsequent thereto---those relations, I say, of redemption, of regeneration, of a power of conversion, that extracts good out of evil, of a love that no apostasy can quench, that no offences can conquer---if these eternal benefits could have been introduced, without their ground or foundation in the admission of evil, no lapse or falling off would ever have been.

Here Mr Clinton paused; and his auditors continued in a kind of respectful musing, as attentive to what he might further offer. At length the Earl exclaimed, Never, never more, my brother, will I debate or question with you, further than asking your advice or opinion, to which I shall instantly and implicitly submit, as I would to that of the highest seraph in heaven. Our dear Meekly, here, and I, had some former converse on a few

of these deep subjects, and I received much satisfaction and instruction from him; but he was not quite so explicit and convincing as you have been.

Ah, my lord, cried Meekly, were I as intimate with the Fountain of all knowledge as your precious brother is, you would not then have posed me in the conversation we last held on those heads.

On the following day, at breakfast, Mr Meekly took out his pocket-book, and produced bank and stock-bills to the amount of something upward of five thousand pounds. He then presented them to Mr Clinton, and said, Here, Sir, is a little matter toward repayment of the loan I had from you in Holland. I bless, I bless my God, that he has enabled me thus far to approve myself an honest man; but, above all, I bless him for giving me once more a sight of the gracious countenance of my patron. But for you, I had miserably perished in a dungeon; to you, Sir, I owe my liberty, to you I owe my life, to you I owe the recovery of the inheritance of my fathers. With respect to such obligations, I am indeed a beggared insolvent. But my heart is pleased with the thought, that the connection between us, of creditor on your part, and of debtor

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 125

on mine, should remain on record to all eternity.

Here the worthy Meekly became oppressed under sensations of grateful recollection; and, putting his handkerchief to his eyes, he sobbed out his passion.

In the mean time, Mr Clinton held the bills in his hand, and carelessly casting his eye over them, perceived the amount. As soon as he saw that his friend's emotion had partly subsided, You have, Mr Meekly, says he, you have been quite a gospel-steward, and have returned me my own with most unlooked-for usury; and I heartily pray God, in recompence of your integrity, to give you the principality of many cities in the coming kingdom of his Son. But what shall I do with this money, my dear Meekly? My wealth already overflows; it is my only trouble, my only incumbrance. It claims my attention, indeed, as it is a trust for which I know I am strictly accountable: but I heartily wish that Providence would reclaim the whole to himself, and leave me as one of his mendicants, who daily wait on the hand that supplieth all, who seek his kingdom, with necessary things; for my Harry has enough, and more than enough, now, in the abundance of his noble father. You must therefore keep

these bills to yourself, my worthy friend ; retain, or give, or dispose of them, even as it shall please you ; whether as your property or as my property, it matters not sixpence ; but take them back, you must take them back, indeed, my Meekly. And so saying, he shoved them over from him, on the table.

Ah, my most honoured Sir, exclaimed the repining Meekly, sure you would not serve me so ! My soul is but just eased of a load that lay heavy on it for many, many years. Be not then so severe as to replace the burden upon me. It would break my very heart, should you persist in refusing this little instance of acknowledgment from one of your warmest lovers.

Here Harry found himself affected and distressed for the parties ; and, in order to relieve them, took the decision of the matter upon himself.

Gentlemen, says he, I will, with your good pleasure, put a very quick end to this dispute ; and I offer myself to you, as your joint trustee, to be your almoner and disposer of these bills.

As I was lately on my rambles through some villages near London, the jingle of a number of infant-voices struck my ear ; and turning, and looking in at the

ground-floor of a long cottage, I perceived about thirty little girls neatly dressed in a uniform, and all very busily and variously employed, in hackling, carding, knitting, or spinning, or in sewing at the sampler, or in learning their letters, and so forth.

The adjoining house contained about an equal number of boys, most of whom were occupied in learning the rudiments of the several handicrafts, while the rest were busied in cultivating a back field, intended as a garden for these two young seminaries.

I was so pleased with what I saw, that I gave the masters and mistresses some small matter; and I resolved, within myself, if ever I should be able, to gather together a little family of my own for the like purposes.

Now, gentlemen, here comes Mr Meekly's money quite in season for saving just so much of my own. But hang it, since I am grown suddenly rich, I think I will be generous for once in my life, and add as much more out of my proper stock. I shall also make so free as to draw on my uncle there for the like sum; and these, totted together, will make a pretty beginning of my little project. As to my poor father here, he has nothing to spare, for

118 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

he has already lavished all his wealth on his naughty boy.

My lord and the company laughed heartily at Harry's little pleasantry——But harkee, honest friend, added the Earl, you must not think to expose me, by leaving me out of your scheme; can't you lend me as much, Harry, as will answer my quota? Yes, my lord, said Harry, upon proper securities, I think I may venture. You are a rogue, and a darling, and my treasure, and my honour, and my ornament, cried the Earl, turning and bending fondly toward him. While Harry's eyes began to swim with pleasure, and, casting himself into his father's bosom, he there hid the tears of his swelling delight; while Mr Clinton and Mr Meekly sat silently wrapt in the enjoyment of the tender scene.

After dinner, the Earl said, Tell me, my ever-amiable Harry Clinton, where in the world could you hide yourself from my inquiries these twenty years past? I have got some scattered sketches of your history from Mr Meekly, and my son here, and have been burning to learn the whole, but dreaded to ask you that favour, lest the recollection of some passages should give you distress. I refuse no pain to do you a pleasure, my brother.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 129

[Here the honourable Mr Clinton began his story, as formerly recited, and that night sent his auditors weeping to bed.

On the following morning, when he came to that part of his narrative where lady Maitland broke away, he proceeded as followeth :]

Having travelled through several parts of France and Italy, I took Germany in my tour. I staid some time at Spa, where I drank the waters, and within the year arrived in perfect health at Rotterdam.

On a visit to Mr De Wit, at his villa near the city, he told me, over our bottle, that he had at that time in his house and in his guardianship one of the most extraordinary women in the universe. Though she is now, says he, advancing toward the decline of life she is by far the most finished female I ever beheld, while all she says, and all she does, give a grace to her person that is quite indescribable. She hath a youth too, her son, with her, who is nearly as great a rarity as herself; and, were it not that his complexion is fallow, and that he is something short of a leg, and blind of one eye, he would positively be the most lovely of all the human species.

You put me in mind, said I laughing, of the Baratarian wench, who was com-

mended to governor Sancho as the most accomplished beauty within a league; with this exception only, that one eye was blind, and that the other ran with brimstone and vermillion. But pray who are these wonders?

That, said he, I either cannot or must not declare. They are evidently people of the first fashion, and must have some uncommon reasons for their present conduct, as they live quite retired, and admit of no company.

I protest, said I, you have raised my curiosity in earnest; is there no managing so as to procure me a short tete-a-tete with them? I wish there was, says he, for I long to know how far your sentiments agree with mine in this matter. Yesterday the lady told me that she intended to go and reside some time in England, and that I would oblige her, by getting a person, duly qualified, to initiate her and her son in the language of the country. And now, if such a fine gentleman could condescend to undress himself, you might come to-morrow, as a person who wanted hire, and I might introduce you to an interview by way of treating, provided you are upon honour not to reveal any thing concerning them, or their place of abode.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 131

The next morning I waited on Mr De Wit, under the appearance of a reduced gentleman, a character that excites a mixture of contempt and compassion.

The lady received and spoke to me with that dignified complaisance which awes while it engages; and, while it attracts, forbids an irreverent familiarity. She was indeed every thing that my friend had boasted of her; for though her person was all majesty, her manner was all grace. Will you answer for the discretion of this young man, Mr De Wit? I will, Madam, said he. I bowed to them both.

On turning, I perceived that her son eyed me with much attention, and I, on my part, surveyed him with the utmost astonishment. He laboured indeed apparently under all the disadvantages that my friend described; but enchantment lurked in his accents, and in the dimpling of his lips; and, when he smiled, heaven itself was infused through the fine roundings of his olive-coloured countenance.

In short, I felt such a sudden attachment to these extraordinary personages, that I resolved to keep on the deception at least for a few days, and accordingly engaged with them at a stated salary.

I entered on my province. My young pupil especially began to improve apace; and, as I was particularly cautious in observing the distant respect that suited my station, I grew into great favour both with mother and son.

How long, Mr De Wit would say, do you propose to carry on this farce? Till I can prevail upon them, I answered, to accompany me to England; for I feel my affection so tied to them, that I cannot think of parting.

On a day as I sat with my pupil in his apartment, he happened to let his book fall; and, as I stooped to take it up, the picture of my Matilda, that was richly enamelled, and set with brilliants to a great value, suddenly looses from its ribband, and dropped through the bosom of my shirt upon the floor.

I stood concerned and greatly abashed by this accident; but my pupil, still more alarmed, started up, and catching at it, gazed upon it intensely. Ha, my friend, said he, I doubt you are an impostor: The proprietor of this jewel would never set himself out to hire without some sinister design. Who, Sir, and what are you?

I own, said I, my sweet fellow, that I am not what I seem; I am of noble de-

scent, and of riches sufficient to purchase a principality.—And what then could induce you to impose upon us as you have done?——Curiosity at first, and then the strong inclination which I took both to you and your mother at our first interview; neither did I propose to reveal myself, till we should reach my native country, where all sorts of honours and affluence attend you.—Tell me then, said he, whose picture is this? a very lovely one indeed! Is this the face, Sir, of your mistress, or your wife? (looking very inquisitively at me). Ah, said I, she was once mistress of thousands of hearts; nobles waited before her drawing room, and dukes near her toilet. She was once also my wife: but the dear saint is now eternally blessed in a more suitable Bridegroom.

Will you indulge me, Sir, said he, with the story of your loves? It may atone in a great measure for your late deception, which, however well meant, was very alarming.

Here I related to him the short pathetic history that I told you of my Matilda; with which he was so affected, and in such violent agitation, that I was quite affrighted for him, and stopped several times; but he insisted on my proceeding.

Ah, said he, when I concluded, should I ever be consoled in the manner that you and your Matty were, how blessed I shall think myself! I have, said I, a little cousin in England, and perhaps the loveliest child in the world, and if you will marry her, when you both come to proper years, I will settle ten million of French money upon you. Mean time I beseech you to say nothing to your mamma of what has passed. I will not, said he, unless I see a discretionary necessity for it.

That night I went to the city to settle the affairs of my household. On my return next morning I met Mr De Wit at the gate of his court. Ah, my friend, said he, our amiable guests are departed. Gone, I cried, gone! which way, where-to, I pray you? That also is a secret, said he, which I am not permitted to tell you. Late in the evening there arrived a retinue of about twenty servants, strongly armed and mounted, with a flying chaise and six horses, and a packet of letters. The lady did not go to bed, but ordered all things to be in readiness for their departure against the rising of the moon. When they were near setting out, and going to bid me adieu, Have you no commands, madam, said I, for the good young man your tutor? Not a penny, says she;

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 135

I cannot afford wages equivalent to servants of his quality. How, madam, said I, is my friend then detected? But it was a very innocent and friendly fraud, I assure you; I should not have imposed him upon your ladyship, did I not know you to be safer in his honourable hands than in those of any other.

I then gave them an account of your family, your vast fortune, nor was I quite silent as to your merits, my dear Harry; and I added, that I was sensible you would be deeply afflicted at the departure of persons to whom you were so strongly attached. There is no help for it, replied the lady; we have reasons of utmost import for not disclosing ourselves to him. Tell him, however, that we esteem him highly——affect him tenderly——shall think of him——shall pray for him——and——lastly——that you saw us drop a grateful tear to his remembrance.

As I could extort no further intelligence from my friend Mr De Wit, I parted in a half kind of chagrin, and prepared to pursue my fugitives, though I knew not what road to take, nor where to turn me for the purpose. At all adventures, however, I set out on the way to France; as they appeared to be of that country, as

well by the elegance of their manners as by their fluency in the language.

I was attended by eleven of as brave and faithful fellows as ever thrust themselves between their master and danger.

On the fifth or sixth day, as we got on the borders of French Flanders, in an open and desolate way, with a forest far on the left, a man rode toward us on the spur, and approaching, cried out, Help, gentlemen, for Heaven's sake, help to rescue my dear ladies, who are plundered and carried away by the banditti? They have already killed twenty of my companions, and I alone am left to cry out for relief.-----I bid him lead, and we followed.

In a few minutes we came where we saw a great number of the dead and dying, covering the sand and thin herbage. But our leader cried out, Stop not here, my noble friends! Yonder they are, yonder they are! they have but just taken away all our horses, luggage, and coach, and are now at the plunder. I am weak through loss of blood, but will help you the best I may.

Here he spurred again toward the enemy, but his horse would not answer his courage. I then looked about to observe if any advantage could be taken; for I

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 137

perceived that the ruffians were still very numerous, about thirty, who had survived the late combat; but, seeing that the country was quite open, and that we had nothing but resolution and our God to help us, I commended myself to him in so good a cause, and, putting my horse to speed, I rode full at the foe, confident of being well and gallantly seconded.

When the banditti perceived us, they instantly quitted the plunder, and gathering into a groupe, they prepared their carabines, and discharged them full at us as we drew near.

As I happened to be foremost, I received the greatest damage. One of their balls gave me this mark in my neck; another passed through the flesh of my left shoulder, and another through my hat, and left this scar in my head.

But, when we came in upon them, as the Romans say, *comminus ense*, hand to hand, had they doubled their numbers, they would have been as nothing to us. My faithful Irishman levelled half a score of them with his own hand, and in less than three minutes we had no opponent in the field. I then rode up to the coach, and perceived two ladies in it, pale as death, and sunk senseless to the bottom.

138 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Immediately I ordered James, my surgeon's mate, to take a little blood from them, and, on their recovery, to follow me, with all my people, and all the horses, baggage, &c. to the nearest inn. Then, feeling my wounds begin to smart, I took my surgeon with me, and galloped away.

In about a league, we came to a large house of entertainment, and finding myself sick and qualmish, through the great effusion of blood, I had my wounds directly dressed, and, taking a draught of wine-whey, got into a warm bed.

After a night of uneasy slumbers, the curtain of my bed was gently drawn aside, and awaking, I heard a voice say, in soft music, Ah, my dear mamma, it is he, it is he himself!

On lifting my feeble eyes, I perceived a vision at my side, of a female appearance, but more wonderful and more lovely than any thing I had ever conceived of the inhabitants in bliss. Her eyes swam in glory, and her whole form seemed a condensing or substantiation of harmony and light.

While I gazed in silent astonishment, I heard another voice say, Don't you know us, my son, my dear Mr Clinton?

don't you remember your pupils? don't you remember your blind, lame, and tawny Lewis? he is now turned into that passable girl there, whose honour and whose life you yesterday preserved, at the great peril of your own.

Here, seizing her hand, I pressed it to my lips, and cried, Am I then so blessed, my honoured madam, as to have done some service to the two dearest objects of my heart's fixed affections? Soft, says she, none of these transports; your surgeon tells us that repose is necessary for you. Mean time we will go and prepare the best regimen that the place can afford for your nourishment; and, after that, I will send a dispatch to my lord, and let him know how far, how very deeply he, and we, and all his house, are indebted to you.

For that day, and the following week, as my fever grew something high, I saw no more of the daughter; and the mother staid no longer than to administer something to me, or barely to inquire how I was. At length I got a cool, and began to recover, when the former vision descended upon my ravished senses, the vision of that Louisa, the sight of whom never failed to bring cheer to the eyes, and delight to the hearts of all beholders.

They sat down by my side, and my lady, taking my hand, and looking tenderly at me, What would you think, said the smiling, of my Louy for a wife? Ah, madam, I exclaimed, she would be too much of bliss, too precious, too glorious, too overpowering for the heart and senses of any mortal! Don't tell me, cries my lady; in my eyes, my Harry, you are full as amiable for a husband, as she can be for a wife. Beside, you have earned her, my son; she is your own dear purchase, by a service of infinite value, and at the price of your precious blood. She has told me the story of your first love, and the recollection of it never fails to bring tears from my eyes. But I must hereafter hear the whole from your own mouth, with all your other adventures; the smallest incident will be very interesting to me, I assure you. O, my dear, my sweet fellow, you are to a hair the very man I wish for my Louisa, the brave, the tender, gentle, and generous heart; just the thing I would have wished for myself, when I was at the age of my Louy.

But, my dearest, my honoured madam, loved and honoured next to heaven, you have not yet told me how your Louisa is inclined: whereupon the bewitching creature, archly smiling, and blushing, and

reaching forth a polished hand of living alabaster, Here, she cried, I present you with this trifle, in token that I do not hate you—very much.

My Clinton, said my lady, I have sent off my favourite servant Gerard with my dispatches to my lord. He is the only one that remains of all my retinue. Your surgeon has dressed his wound, and pronounces it so slight, as not to incommode him in his journey. I chose him more particularly for the carrier of my purposes, as he was the witness of your valour; as he can testify to my lord with what intrepidity you rushed foremost into the thick of the assassins; and with what unexampled bravery you defeated, in a short time, a body of four or five times your number. These things, I trust, will have their due weight: for though my lord is of a lofty and inflexible nature, he is yet alive to the feelings of honour and justice, so that our affairs have a hopeful and auspicious aspect. But you are a little flushed, my child; we will not encroach further upon you till to-morrow.

During the three following weeks, though confined to my bed, I was permitted to sit up, and my wounds, though not skinned, were healing apace. What happiness did I enjoy during that ecstatic

interval! the maternal and filial angels scarce ever left my side. One morning, when I just awoke from a terrifying dream, they both entered with peace and comfort, and healing in their countenances.

What is the matter, my Harry, said my lady? your face does not seem composed to that fortitude and complacence which is seated in your heart. Ah, madam, I cried, I have been all night tormented with the most alarming and horrible visions I ever had in my life. Three times I dreamed successively, that my Louisa and I were walking hand in hand through the fields of Elysium, or on the banks of Meander, or in the gardens of Alcinous, gazing and drinking in large draughts of love from each other; when at one time a huge and tremendous dragon, at another a sudden earthquake, and at another an impetuous hurricane, came, and caught and severed us far asunder.

But my visions, my honest friend, said the heavenly smiling Louisa, have been of a very different nature. I dreamed that, while we were standing on the bank of a frightful precipice together, your Matilda descended, all celestial, and a thousand times more lovely than she appears in the lovely portrait that you carry about you. At first I feared that she came to reclaim

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 143

you to herself; but instead of that, she smiled upon me, and began to caress me, and taking my right hand she put it into your's. Then ascending in her brightness, she hovered a-while on high, and casting down upon me a look of fixed love, she gave me a beck with her hand, as it were to follow, and was immediately lost in glory.

O, my dear children, cried the marchioness, (for such she was), might I but once see you united, how I should lift my head! or rather, how satisfied I should be to lay it down in peace, having nothing further to care for on this side of eternity!

That night I slept sounder than usual, and did not awake till the day was something advanced. On opening the curtain, I saw James seated in a moody posture by the side of my bed. How are the ladies, James? said I. Gone, Sir. Gone, gone! I cried out. Yes, Sir, gone indeed; but with very heavy hearts, and both of them drowned in tears. Here has been a large body of the Gens d' Armes sent for them, so that there was no resisting. Poor Gerard went on his knees to his lady, to beg permission to throw himself at your honoured feet, as he said, and to bid you adieu, but she would not allow him. Mean

144 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

time, she charged me with this watch and ring, and this letter for your honour.

I caught at the letter, and, tearing it open, read over and over, a thousand times, what will for ever be engraven in my memory, and on my heart.

“ WE leave you, we leave you, most
 “ beloved of men, and we are miserable in
 “ so doing ; but alas we are not our own
 “ mistresses. My lord, for this time, has
 “ proved unjust and ungrateful ; and re-
 “ fuses your Louisa, as well to my pray-
 “ ers as to your infinite merits. He
 “ has affianced her, as it seems, to a prince
 “ of the blood, and his ambition has blind-
 “ ed him to all other considerations. Be
 “ not yet in despair, we shall exert our
 “ very utmost to get this injurious sen-
 “ tence reversed ; and if your Louisa in-
 “ herits my blood or spirit, not all the en-
 “ gines in France will ever compel her to
 “ give her hand to another. In the mean
 “ time, follow us not, come not near us,
 “ we beseech you. Should you be dis-
 “ covered, you will inevitably be assassina-
 “ ted ; and we also should perish in your
 “ loss, my son. We are distracted by our
 “ fears for you, and it is this fear that
 “ has prevented us from disclosing our-
 “ selves fully to you. Keep up your cor-
 “ respondence, however, with our friend

“ De Wit, and thro’ him you shall learn
 “ the first favourable turn that happens
 “ in our affairs. I leave you my ring, in
 “ token of your being the wedded of our
 “ heart; and Louisa leaves you her watch,
 “ to remind you of time past, and to look
 “ upon, when at leisure, and think of

“ Your ELOISA DE———

“ Your LOUISA DE———”

Yes, I cried, ye precious relics, ye delicious memorandums, to my lips, to my heart! Be ye the companions of my solitude, the consolers of my affliction! Sooner shall this arm be torn off, and time itself pass away, than one or the other shall be divided from my custody.

Ah, how useless are admonitions to the impatience of a lover! fervent love can know no fears. I was no sooner able to fit my horse, than I set off directly for Paris; with this precaution only, that my people were to call me by my mother’s maiden name of Goodall.

As we knew not the names or titles of those after whom we were in search, our eyes became our only inquisitors; and we daily ranged the town, poring into every carriage of distinction for a sight of the mother or daughter; and even prying among the lacqueys and liveries for the face of our friend Gerard.

On a day, as my valiant Tirlah and I rode abroad, reconnoitring the suburbs, we heard a noise and shout of distress that issued from a distant farm-house; and, as we hastened up, the tumult grew louder, and the cry of help! and murder! was several times repeated.

We instantly knocked at the door, but were refused admittance, when Tirlah alighted, ran against it, and, breaking through bars and all, with his foot threw the door off its hinges.

On entering, we saw a man stretched on the broad of his back on the floor, with four others about him, who were going to use him very barbarously. Stay your hands, I cried; I will shoot the first man through the head who shall dare to proceed in this business.

Why, Sir, said a young fellow, rising, this man wanted to be gracious with my pretty young wife; I caught him in the very attempt; and so I think it but fair and honest to spoil him of such sport for time to come. Ay, but said I, you might murder him, and I cannot suffer that. Come, my friend, no harm appears to be done as yet, and if he pays a handsome penance for the wickedness of his intention, I would advise you to pass matters over for the present. Say, how much do

you demand ? Five hundred Louis d'Ors, said the fellow ; if he pays that, he shall be quit for this turn.

Five hundred Louis d'Ors ! I exclaimed ; why, all the clothes on his back are not worth the hundredth part of the sum. True, master, said the peasant, winking, but his pockets may happen to be richer than his clothes. Well, said I, if he secures you in half the sum, I think you may be satisfied. Why, master, since you have said it, I will not go back. Whereupon the astonished prisoner was permitted to rise.

What do you say, you very bad man ? Are you willing to pay this fellow the sum I agreed for, in compensation of the injury you attempted to do him ? I am, Sir, said he, with many thanks for your mediation. Then, hastily putting his hand to his pocket, he took out a note on the customs, which, with some small matter of cash, made up the money, and we departed the house together.

As I was just going to mount, he came up and accosted me with elegance and dignity. Sir, said he, you have made me your debtor, beyond expression, beyond the power of princes to pay. Be pleased, however, to accept the little I have about me ; here are five thousand Louis, in this

little note-book. Not a penny, Sir, indeed; I am by no means in want. You must not refuse, said he, some token of my acknowledgment; here is a stone valued at double the sum I offered you: then taking from a pocket the diamond button of his hat, he presented it to me. You must excuse me, Sir, said I; I can accept of no consideration for doing an action of humanity; and I rejoice to have preserved a person of your distinction and generosity. I then turned my horse, and, though he called after me, I rode away, being neither desirous of knowing or being known.

My researches hitherto being altogether fruitless, I imagined I might, with better likelihood, meet my beloved in the public walks, public theatres, or rooms of distinguished resort.

One night, as I sat alone in a side box at the opera, intently gazing and hungering around for some similitude of my Louisa, there entered one of the loveliest young fellows I ever beheld. He carelessly threw himself beside me, looked around, withdrew his eyes, and then looked at me with such a long and piercing inquisition as alarmed me, and gave me cause to think I was discovered.

Though the French seldom hesitate, he seemed at once backward and desirous of

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 149

accosting me. At length he entered upon converse touching the drama and the music, and spoke with judgment and elegance superior to the matter; while I answered him with due complacency, but in a manner that partook of that regardlessness for trifles which then sat at my heart.

Between the acts, he turned, and cast his eye suddenly on me. Sir, says he, do you believe that there is such a thing as sympathy? Occasionally, Sir, I think it may have its effect; though I cannot credit all the wonders that are reported of it. I am sorry for that, said he, as I ardently wish that your feelings were the same as mine at this instant. I never saw you before, Sir; I have no knowledge of you; and yet I declare, that, were I to choose an advocate in love, a second in combat, or a friend in extremity, you, you are the very man upon whom I would pitch.

I answered not, but seized his hand, and pressed it to my bosom. I conceive, Sir, continued he, notwithstanding your fluency in the language, that you are not a native. My name is D'Aubigny; I live at such a place; and if you will do me the pleasure of a single visit, all the honours, respects, and services, that our house can confer, shall be your's without reserve.

Sir, said I, I am of England ; my name is Goodall ; and as soon as a certain affair allows me to admit of any acquaintance in Paris, you shall be the first elected of my arms and my heart.

In a few nights after, as Tirlah and I were turning a corner of the Rue de St Jaques, we saw three men, with their backs to the wall, attacked by nearly three times their number. We did not hesitate a moment what part to take. At the first pass I ran one of the assassins through the body ; Tirlah levelled two more with his oaken staff, and the rest took to flight.

Gentlemen, said one of the three, I thank you for this brave and seasonable assistance.—Roche, run for a surgeon, I am wounded, I doubt, dangerously.----- Pierre, lend me your arm-----Come, gentlemen, we have but a little way to my house.

Though the night was too dark for examining features, I thought that the voice was not quite unknown to me. Within a few minutes we arrived at a palace that retired, inward, from the houses that were ranged on either hand. On pulling the hanger of a bell, the great door opened upon a sumptuous hall, which led to a parlour, enlightened by a silver-sconce that hung from the vaulting.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 151

As we entered, the master turned short upon me, and looking full in my face, and starting and lifting his hands in surprise, Great ruler of events! he cried. the very man I wished my brother and companion through life! and this is the very man you have sent to my rescue!

Just then the surgeon arrived, and I heard him hastily asking where the marquis was. On entering, he said, I am sorry for your misfortune, my lord; but matters may be better than we apprehend; and immediately he took out his case of instruments. One of the ruffians, said the marquis, before I was aware, came behind, and run me through the back.

The surgeon then ript open his lordship's waistcoat, and changed colour on seeing his shirt drenched in blood. But, getting him quickly undressed, and having probed his wound, he struck his hands together, and cried, Courage, my friends! it is only a flesh-business; the weapon has passed clear of the ribs and vitals.

As soon as the marquis's wound was dressed, and that we had got him to bed, I fancy, Sir, said I to the surgeon, I may have some small occasion for a cast of your office; I feel a little smart in my sword-arm.

On stripping, he found that a chance thrust had entered about half an inch into the muscle above my elbow, and had ripped up some of the skin. But he quickly applied the proper dressing, and I was preparing to take my leave, when the marquis cried out. You must not think of parting, my dear friend; you are the master of the master here, and lord of this house, and of all that is in it.

The surgeon then ordered his lordship to compose himself as soon as possible; and, having wished him a good-night, I sent Tirlah to my lodgings, to let my people know that I was well, and in friendly hands. I was then conducted by the domestics to a superb apartment, where a bed was prepared, and where a small supper of elegancies lay fuming on the sideboard.

Having swallowed a few bits, with a glass or two of wine, I rose and sauntered through the room, musing on my Louisa, heavily sighing, and nearly despairing of being ever able to find her.

Some time after, I sat down, to undress and get to bed, when a number of the officers of justice silently entered my chamber, seized my sword that I had put off, and coming whisperingly to me, com-

manded me to accompany them, without making any noise.

I saw that it was madness to resist ; and, as I went with them, I observed that two of the family-liveries had joined themselves to the officers. It then instantly occurred that I was in the house of my rival ; that the marquis was the very person to whom my Louisa had been destined ; that I was somehow discovered ; and that they were conducting me to the Bastille, of which I had heard as many affrighting stories as are usually told of the inquisition.

Ah, traitor, said I to myself, is it thus you serve the man who but now saved your life at the expence of his own blood ? Let no one hereafter trust to the bleating of the lamb, or the courting of the turtle ; the roaring of the lion, and the pounces of the vulture, may thus deceitfully lurk under the one and the other.

After passing some streets, they took me to a large house, where dwelt one of their chief magistrates, being also a member of their parliament. Having knocked respectfully at the gate, and waited some time, at length we were admitted, and they took me to a kind of lobby, where we staid, while one of the posse went to advise the justiciary of my attendance. At length he returned, and, accosting me

in a tone of surly and discouraging authority, Friend, says he, my lord is engaged, and not at leisure to-night; to-morrow, perhaps, he may hear what you have to plead in your own defence. So saying, he and his fellows thrust me into a waste room, and locked and chained the door upon me, and laughing, bid me to warm or cool my heels at pleasure.

Fool, fool that I was, said I, to quit the side of my brave and faithful companions, how quickly should we have discomfited this magistrate and all his host! but I must be a night-adventurer forsooth, and draw my sword in defence of every scoundrel who goes the street.

I then went and felt the windows, to try if I could force a passage for making my escape; but finding that all were grated with strong and impassable bars of iron, O, I cried, that this marquis, this ungrateful D'Aubigny were now in his fullest strength, and opposed to me, point to point, that I might reclaim from him, in an instant, the life I have given!

I then traversed the room with an incessant pace, now rashly resolving on furious events, and again more sedately deliberating on what I had to do; till, having ruminated thus for the remainder of the night, I at last became more at

ease, and resigned myself to the dispensations of all-disposing Providence, though, I confess, with a gloomy and reluctant kind of content.

When the day appeared, and was something advanced, I heard my door unlocking, and the chain taking away, and I concluded that they came to summon me to my trial; but instead of the officers of justice, I saw near twenty men in the marquis's livery, who silently bowed down before me, and respectfully shewed me, with their hand, the way out of my prison. I followed them also in silence, and getting into the street, I wished to know if I was really free, and turned from them down the way that led to my lodgings; whereupon they cast themselves before me, and, in a supplicating posture, besought me to go with them.

Finding then that I was still their prisoner, I gave a longing look out for my valiant fellows; but as they did not appear, I suffered myself to be reconducted to the marquis's palace, and followed my obsequious commanders into the proud apartment, to which they had led me the preceding night, and where, bowing to the ground, they all left me, and retired.

As I had been much fatigued in body and mind, I threw myself on the bed,

156 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

leaving events to their issues, and fell into a kind of starting and intermitting slumber, when I heard a voice, at my side, shout out, in once-loved accents, O, my dearest mamma, it is he, indeed, it is he, it is he himself!

On this I awoke, and roused myself; and lifting my languid eyes, and fixing them on the object that stood before me, And are you then, I cried, are you also, Louisa, in the confederacy against me?— Say nothing, you are not the Louisa I once knew——I will arise, I will go forth; not all your gates, and bars, and bolts shall hold me; I will tear my body and my soul too, if possible, from you for ever!—— Go to your betrothed, to your beloved! and leave me to perish, it is a matter of no import-----I am yet pleased that I saved your chosen; as it may one day serve to reproach you with the merits of the man whom he has so unworthily treated!

I could no more. A long silence on all sides ensued, save the language that was uttered by heavings and sobbings. When the marchioness, coming and casting herself on her knees by my bed, You have reason, Sir, she exclaimed, you have reason to reproach and to detest every branch of our ungrateful family for ever! you saved myself, you saved my daughter;

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 157

and yet the father and the husband proved averse to your deservings, and turned your benefits into poison. You have now saved our son, the only one who can convey our name to posterity; and yet, from the beginning, you have received nothing in return, save wounds, pains, and sickness, losses, damages, and disappointments: and, at this very day, the most ignominious usage, where you merited endless thanks and everlasting renown. Blame my Louisa then, and me, but blame not my son, Sir, for these unworthy events; he is quite innocent of them, he is shocked and distracted by them; he respects and loves you more than ever Jonathan loved the son of Jesse. But he will not, he dare not see you, till we have in some measure made his peace.

How, madam! I cried,——but no more of that posture, it pains me past bearing.——Is it a fact, can it be possible, that the marquis D'Aubigny should be your son? Is he not of the blood-royal, the very rival whom your letter rendered so formidable to me? and was it not by his order that I was disgracefully confined in a dungeon all night?

No, no, said my lady, he would have suffered the rack first. He is in despair, quite inconsolable on that account. Let

us go, my dearest Harry, let us go and carry comfort to him of whom you are the beloved.

Ah no, my mamma, cried out Louisa, let us put no constraint on Mr Clinton, I pray you! there has been enough of confinement; we leave him now to his liberty; let him go, even where, and to whom he likes best. Once, indeed, we could have tied this all-conquering champion with the spinning of a silkworm; but now he tells us, that neither gates, bars, nor bolts, shall hold him to us.

Here I threw myself precipitately at her feet. Pardon, pardon, my Louisa, I cried, O pardon the misdeeming transports of your lover, and pardon the faults that love alone could commit. My enemies are foreign to me, they and their injuries affect me not; but you are regent within, my Louisa; you sit throned in my heart, and the presumption of an offence from you makes strange uproar in my soul. Well, says she, reaching her hand, and smiling through tears, since it is so, poor soul, here is the golden sceptre for you; I think I must take you to mercy,

I caught her hand, and impressed my very spirit on the wax; and my lady, casting her arms about us, and kissing us

both in turns, requested that we should go and carry some consolation to her dear repining Lewis.

As we entered his chamber, the marchioness cried out, Here he comes, my son, we have brought your beloved to you; yet not your Mr Goodall, as you thought, but one who is at once, both your good angel and our good angel, even our own Harry Clinton, the betrothed of our souls.

I took my seat on the side of the marquis's bed, and looking fondly upon him, would have enquired of his health, but my speech for the time was overpowered by my affections. Then, taking my hand in his, The power of this hand, says he, I have found to be great; but has your heart the power to pardon the insults and outrage you have received in the house of him who is so deeply your debtor? My lord, said I, I have already drank largely of Lethe on that head; nothing but my diffidence of our regard can offend me.

You know not, said my lady, you know not yet, my dear Harry, how this provoking business came about. I will explain it in a few words.

On our return to Paris, and on our remonstrances to my late lord of the in-

estimable services you had rendered to his family, he enquired your character among the English; and, notwithstanding the report of the nobility of your birth, and your yet nobler qualities, hearing also that you had acquired part of your fortune in trade, he conceived an utter contempt for you, and took an utter aversion to you.

Some time after, as he took notice that Louisa and I wanted our watch and our ring, I dreaded his displeasure, and gave him room to think that the robbers had taken them from us in Flanders; and this report became current among our domestics.

In the mean time, my lord became importunate with our Louisa, respecting her marriage with the prince of C—— who was then with the army; and her prayers and tears, hitherto had been the only artillery which she had used in her defence. But, when the couriers brought word that the prince was on his return, my lord sent for Louisa, and gave her instant and absolute orders to prepare for her nuptials. But she, full as positively and peremptorily replied, that her soul was already wedded; that she would never prostitute her body where her heart was an alien; and that all the tortures of the

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 161

inquisition should not change her resolution. Her father thereupon rose to such ungovernable fury, that, with one blow of his hand, he struck her senseless to his feet. But, when he saw my lamb, my darling, all pale and as dead before him, the tide of nature returned; and the conflict of his passions became so violent, that an imposthume broke in his stomach, and falling, he was suffocated, and expired on the spot.

Soon after the prince arrived. He had never seen my daughter; but his ambition to possess a beauty, of whom the grand monarch himself was said to have been enamoured, had caused him to demand her in marriage. For that purpose he also did us the honour of a visit. Louisa refused to appear; and I told his highness, with the best grace I could, that she happened to be pre-engaged. In a few days after he met my son on the Thuilleries, and accosted him to the same intent; but my son had been previously prejudiced in your favour, my Harry, and answered the prince, with so cold or so haughty an air, that further words ensued, they both drew, and his highness was slightly wounded; but, as company interposed, the affair was hushed up, and, shortly after, the prince was killed in a nightly

162 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

broil upon the Pont-neuf. We then wrote to our friend De Wit to advertise you of these matters, and to hasten you hither; but you arrived, my child, you arrived before there could be any expectation of an answer.

Two days ago, as I observed that my lamb's spirits were something dejected, I prevailed upon her to take an airing to our country-villa. On our return this morning, we were struck half dead with the news that our Lewis was wounded and dangerously ill in his bed. We flew into his room, and were still more alarmed to find him in a fury that is not to be imagined, while Jacome, his old steward, was on his knees, all pale and quaking, at a distance before him. Villain, he cried, what have you done with my friend? what have you done with my champion, the preserver of my life?—Please your lordship, said he, trembling, I took him for a highwayman; I saw my lady's ring and my young mistress's watch in his custody; I will swear to the property before the parliament of Paris, and so I lodged him in prison——till——till——.

Go wretch, cried my son, recall your information; take all your fellows with you, and instantly bring me back my

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 163

friend, or your ears shall be the forfeit ; but conduct him to his own chamber ; I cannot yet bear to see him, I cannot bear the reproach that his eye must cast upon me.

All afflicted, and yet more astonished, my Louisa and I sat down by the side of my son, casting looks of surprise and enquiring doubt on each other. At length I said, What is this that I hear of our ring, and our watch ? Alas, he is no highwayman who took them from us ; they were our own free gift, a mite in return for a million of services. But do you know any thing of the possessor ? I know, answered Lewis, that he is the loveliest of mankind, the preserver of my life, and that his name is Goodall. Ah ! screamed out Louisa, there we are lost again ; this Goodall must certainly have murdered our precious Clinton, and possessed himself of our gifts ; he would never have parted with them while he had life. O my sister, said my son, when you see my friend Goodall, you will think nothing of your Harry Clinton ! Why, why were you so hasty, so precipitate in your choice ? A robber, a murderer : No---had I a thousand lives, I would pawn them all for the probity that heaven has made apparent in the face of my preserver.

It is with shame and great reluctance, my dearest brother, that at times I recite passages tending so much to my own praise; and yet, did I omit them, I should do great injustice to the kind and amiable partiality of those who were so fondly my lovers and my beloved.

But, madam, said I to the marchioness, did you not hint something of his majesty's being enamoured of my Louisa? Ah, such a rival would be a terrible business indeed, especially in a country of unlimited power.

There is no fear of that now, said my lady. The king has changed his fancy, from young mistresses and old counsellors, to young counsellors and old mistresses. But what I mentioned was once very serious and alarming.

My Louisa was scarce turned of fourteen, when the duchess de Choiseul requested her company to Marlay, where the court then was. The king fixed his eye on her, and enquired who she was; but took no further notice at that time. Missing her, however, at the next, and again at the following drawing-room, he asked the marquis what became of his fair daughter? said he had a place in his eye for her; and desired, in an accent of authority, that he would send her to court.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 165

The marquis instantly took the alarm. He was ever jealous of his honour, and singularly nice in matters of female reputation. He gave his majesty a sort of equivocal consent; and hurrying home, ordered me directly to prepare for carrying my daughter out of the French dominions. The night was employed in hastening and packing. We disguised our Louisa in the manner as you saw her metamorphosed at Rotterdam, and set off for Holland before day. The rest you know, my Clinton, as you were the principal mover in all our concerns.—But tell me, my Lewis, can you conjecture on what account those assassins set upon you?—I declare, madam, said the marquis, I cannot; perhaps they mistook me for another; or, now I recollect, it might be owing to some familiar chat which I had the other night with a pretty opera-girl, who is said to be in the keeping of a very great man. But, madam, you forgot to tell my brother how my father was banished, on account of Louisa, to his paternal seat in Languedoc, on the borders of the Mediterranean. Very true, said the marchioness, and was not recalled till madam Maintenon was taken into supreme favour.

But I wonder what is become of our faithful Gerard ; I thought that he would have been the first to come, and to throw himself at the feet of his hero. Indeed, my Harry, he would have tired any, who loved you less, with his praises and perpetual talking of you and your exploits.—O here he comes.—Step in, Gerard. Is there any one in this company that you remember beside the family ?

Gerard then advanced with a half-frantic aspect, and kneeling and grappling at my hand, seemed desirous of devouring it. God be praised, he cried, God be praised, my noble, my glorious master, that I see you once again! and, above all, that I have the blessing of seeing you in a place, where a throne of beaten gold should be raised to your honour. O, had I been here, all sorts of respects and worships, instead of indignities, should have been paid to your deservings. But I have provided for the hang-dog Jacome ; I have tied him neck and heels, and tumbled him into a dark vault.

Ay, said I, but, my good friend Gerard, I have not yet got my share of satisfaction upon him ; pray shew me where he is. I then followed Gerard to the place where the deplorable wretch was cast ; and cutting all his cords, I led him back to the

company, and warmly joined his petition for pardon and restoration.

As soon as Jacôme and Gerard were withdrawn, Ah, my brother, cried the Marquis, what new name shall we find for a man of your new character? Moreover, what shall we do with you, what shall we do for you? You have quite overpowered us, we sink, we drown under the sense of our obligations. We have nothing worth our acceptance, save this simple wench; and what is she in comparison of what we owe you? Ah, I cried, she is that without whom all things are nothing; she is the living treasure, the Rachel of Rachels; seventy times seven years were too short a service for her! I would not exchange this little pearly joint of this very little finger for all the gems that grow in the mines of India; and so saying, I pressed the precious finger with my lips; while Louisa turned upon me an eye of such ineffable satisfaction and melting acknowledgment, as sunk upon my soul, and wrapt it in Elysium.

Ay but, my Harry, said the Marquis, you ought not to prize your Louy as much as me; she did not fall in love with you at first sight as I did. How did you know that, honest friend, cried Louisa? Is there a necessity that our tongues as

168 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

well as our blushes should be tell-tales? Are maidens to trumpet forth their thoughts, like you broad-fronted men, whose ornament is your boldfacedness.

Thus happy, above all stiled happy upon earth, we joyed and lived in each other, continuing a mutual commerce of delightful sensibilities and love for love.

Alas, our blissful Junto was soon to be broken in upon. In a few days, one of the royal pages came and intimated to the marchioness, that his Majesty required her immediate presence at court. And we remained in a kind of fearful and fluctuating suspense till her return.

As she entered, the consternation in her countenance instantly struck an alarm to all our hearts. O, my children, my dear, my dear children, we must part, she cried, and that too, speedily. Our hour of bliss is past; our sunshine is over; and the clouds gather thick upon us, heavy laden with wretchedness. Alas, my heart misgave me ever since that inauspicious encounter the other morning. As we came from our villa a great funeral met us (a bad omen as I have heard) our carriage stopped to let them pass, and the carriage of the duke of Ne——rs drove up beside us. As we remained within a few paces of each other, he gazed at Louisa with such

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 169

an unmannered intenfeness, as caused her to colour and turn aside. However, he accosted us not, nor enquired concerning us; it seems our arms and livery were too sure an indication of our name and quality. In short, on my approaching the presence, the king affected to smile very graciously upon me, and said, I have provided, madam, a noble and princely husband for your daughter; it is the duke of Ne—rs. Ah! I cried, bending my knee in a supplicating posture, my daughter is already engaged, by bands of the most endearing and indissoluble obligations, to a man who has preserved the lives and honours of all our family; to a man who, I trust, by his eminent courage and qualities, will become the brightest jewel in your majesty's crown. Madam, said he severely, you must withdraw your election. I find I have ordered matters superior to your merits: but my will is the law here, and shall be obeyed. I rose dejectedly, curtsied, and withdrew without reply.

Ah! I exclaimed, on what summit does this rival hold his abode? I will instantly go and scale it, and at once put an end to his life and his pretension! My lady then, throwing her arms about my neck, and pressing her lips to my cheek, What romance, says she, is this, my Harry? would

you at once fight the duke, and the king, and the whole army of France? No, my child, prudence reduces us to more salutary, however deplorable measures. We must part, my Harry, we must part this very night, and my Louisa must depart with you. My chaplain shall this minute unite you by ties that death alone can sunder. Alas! my precious babes, I little expected that your nuptials should be celebrated by tears and wailings! But better these than no nuptials. When you are once joined, I shall care little for myself; and if we meet no more here, we may yet meet hereafter, as happily as the barbarians who tear us asunder.

The chaplain was then summoned, and having performed his office, no congratulations nor salutations ensued, save a kiss and a sigh of mine on the hand of my angel. The marquis then called me, and drawing me down to him, he pressed me ardently to his bosom, cried, O my Harry, O my Harry! burst into tears, and dismissed me.

Meanwhile all was in bustle and hurry throughout the palace. No festival was prepared, no bridal-bed laid. Horses, arms, and carriages, were all the cry; and the marchioness, with an anguishing heart, but amazing resolution, issued her orders

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 171

with a presence of mind that seemed serene in the midst of tempest.

I then sent for my brave fellows, with orders to double their arms, and to double their ammunition. They came accordingly. It was now within three hours of day. All was dispatched, all in readiness, the carriages were at the gate. Silence sat on every tongue, and a tear on every cheek. I threw myself at my mother's feet, I clasped, I clung to them; she wept aloud over me, but neither of us uttered a word. When, rending myself away, I took my sobbing Louisa under my arm, seated her gently in her chariot, placed myself to support her, and away we drove.

When we got clear of the town, and were speeding on the way, my Louisa started, and cried out, O how fast, how very fast they take me from you, my mamma! Whither, whither do they carry me? perhaps never to return, never to meet again! I answered not, but kissed her hand, and drew her gently to me, and she seemed more at ease. But, after a while, I felt her agitation at my bosom, and she exclaimed, From my birth to this hour of wo, my blessed mamma, never was I from those dear arms of your's! shall I ever, shall I ever again behold those

eyes that used to look with such fondness upon me?

Here I could no longer contain, but taking her hands between mine, and weeping upon them, I said, Will you then, my angel? Are you resolved upon breaking the heart of your Harry? O no, says she, no, not for worlds upon worlds would I break that dear and feeling heart, the heart of my heart, the heart of which I became enamoured. She then leaned her head fondly over, and in a while fell fast asleep; while my arms gently encircled, and my soul hovered over her, as the wings of a turtle over her new-begotten.

When she awoke, and found herself so endearingly situated, she gave me a look that overvalued the ransom of a monarch, she kissed my hands in turns, she kissed the skirts of my garments. O, she cried, I will endeavour, I will do my best to be more composed, I know I ought not to repine. I am too rich, too happy. I ought to wish for nothing more; I ought to wish for no one more; since my Harry is so near me, since I have him to myself.—But——but——and here her lovely lips began again to work; and the drops that trembled in her living brilliants could hardly be restrained from breaking prison.

—Soon after, the grief of her heart overweighed her spirits, and she fell again asleep into my arms, that opened of themselves to receive her.

On setting up for the night, I rejoiced to find that my Louisa was something more alive; and that her repose on the way had greatly deducted from the fatigue that I apprehended.

When we had eaten a bit of supper, she looked to me and from me with downcast lids; and, with changing looks and a faltering accent, began to say, Will you, will you permit me, my love, to be regent for a little time, and in a very trifling matter? Allow me only to be governess for a few days, and I promise that you shall be my supreme lord and sweet master all the rest of my life.

I swear, said I in a transport, by that precious head, that you are already queen-regent of all my thoughts and actions; and that, during my existence, you shall dispose of all that I have and all that I am at pleasure.

O then, said she, my Harry, we must lie apart for some nights. I would not have our chaste and blessed bridal stained by tears and dirges. Nay, no hesitation: you have sworn that I am ruler, and I will be obeyed.

I then cast myself at her knees, and; hiding my face in her lap, Cruel, cruel Louisa, I cried, I find you are not yet mine. What shall I do to earn you? But I will be patient, if possible; I would not, for the world, put the colour of constraint on the love of my beloved. And so I kissed her gown, in token of due homage.

Arising, I called her maids, and desired that they would order their mistress's chamber to be prepared, as also a bed for themselves in the same apartment. I then secretly ordered, that a pallet should be spread for myself before her outer door; and laying myself down, with my arms at my side, I guarded, like the dragon of old, the precious fruit of my Hyperia.

At length we reached Calais, and immediately sent to the beach to engage a ship for wafting us over to the land of freedom and rights, but the wind was contrary.

Meanwhile the day advanced toward evening, and my Louisa and I sat together in the arbour of a little pleasure-garden that lay behind the house, when James came hastening to us, and cried, Hide yourself, madam, for heaven's sake hide yourself! here is the Duke de

Ne——rs, with a large party of the king's light horse.

Poor Louisa started up, and attempted to fly; but she trembled and grew faint, and sunk down again on her seat.

James, said I, stay and take care of your mistress. Then turning with hasty steps to the house, I recommended my spirit in a short ejaculation, and entered, determined that the duke should accompany me in death. His highness was in the parlour. I advanced fiercely toward him. So, Sir, says he, you have cost us a warm chace——Heavens! what do I see!——and so crying out, he threw himself back into an arm-chair, all panting, and his aspect working with distraction and disappointment.——Cursed chance! he again exclaimed, are you the man Clinton?——Ah, I must not hurt you, I ought not to injure you; but what is then to be done?——Where have you put my Louisa?——But no matter; let her not appear, let me not see her. I could not answer the consequence.——I would be just if I could, Clinton——O love, O honour, how you do distract me!——You refused my treasures and jewels, Clinton; but then you have rent from me a gem more estimable than my dukedom.——Help, saints; help, angels; help me

to wrestle with myself!—Honour, virtue, gratitude, O, compel me to be just! —Tear, tear me away, while there's strength to depart!—Adieu, Clinton, you are recompensed; should we happen to meet again, I may assail you without reproach. And so saying, he rose suddenly, and rushed out of the house.

I then hastened to seek my love, but had scarce entered the garden, when I saw James on his knees before her, endeavouring to oppose her way to the house. But she cried, Away, villain, let me pass, they are murdering my lord, they are murdering my husband, I will go and perish with him: then breaking away from him, she shot along like a lap-wing, till, seeing me advancing, she sprung upon my bosom, crying, O my Harry, O my Harry, are you safe, are you safe? and fainted away in my arms.

The rest of my story, my lord, is no way material or entertaining. The serene of heart-felt happiness has little of adventure in it, and is only interesting to the possessors.

Having settled my affairs in London, and carrying my Eden along with me, I passed into Holland to settle and be quit of matters there also. For the world that I wished was in my holding, and all things

else appeared either nugatory or encumbering.

It was there that I met our Meekly ; and taking a pleasant tour through the skirts of Germany, we entered France ; and leaving Paris on the right hand, we reached the Marquis's country-seat, situated near twenty leagues beyond the metropolis.

What a meeting ! what an interview ! my Louisa sunk into tears, for half an hour, on the bosom of her mother. And the Marquis would put me from him and pull me to him again, all panting with transport, and insatiate of his caresses. It was too much of joy, it was pleasure to paining. The domestics would no longer be restrained from their share of the felicity ; they rushed in, and, as though we had been new descended divinities, they dropped on their knees, they fell prostrate, and clung about us, kissed our feet, our hands, our garments, and broke forth into cries, as though it had been the house of mourning and lamentation.

On retiring, they got my Louisa's Gerard to themselves ; he now became a man of mighty importance among them. They crowded about him, and, in a joint voice, but a distraction of questions, enquired after our travels, our adventures, our good

and evil occurrences, and all that concerned us.

The marchioness then coming, and casting her honoured arms around me, and weeping upon me, cried aloud, O Harry, my son, my son, I delivered my daughter to you, even as Edna committed her Sarah, of special trust, to Tobias, and I see that you have intreated her very kindly, my son, my son !

As my Louisa now began to be apparently pregnant, I earnestly pressed my precious mother and brother to accompany us to England, the place where law was regent ; where there was no apprehension of inquisitions or bastiles ; and where the peasant was guarded, as with a bulwark of adamant, against every encroachment of arbitrary power. They assented with joy ; and the Marquis going to his *escritoir*, brought forth bills to the amount of ten millions of livres, the produce of some concerns which he had disposed of for the purpose. Here, my brother, says he, if I am not able to be grateful, if I am not able to be generous, I will at least be just ; here is the patrimony to which my lovely sister is entitled. But, said I to the Marquis, my Louisa can admit of no accession of value. Keep your goods to yourself. Remember how Esau said to

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 179

Jacob, I have enough, enough, my brother; these things can add nothing to the abundance of my blessings. But then, he cried, you must accept them, as a token of our loves; and so he constrained and impelled them upon me.

Soon after, we passed to London, where we continued some months, and where my Louisa was delivered of my little Eloisa, who was said to be the beautiful likeness of her father.

We then retired to my seat near Stratford, on the fatal Avon, the chief of the landed possessions that Mr Golding had bequeathed me; where we remained something upward of five years, happy, I think, above all that ever were happy upon earth. For my Louisa was perpetual festivity to our sight and to our hearts; her eyes beamed with living and sentimental glory; her attitudes were grace, her movements were music, and her smiles were fascination. Still varying, yet exhibiting the same delight, like the northern Aurora, she shone in all directions; and she sported as though she had gone to heaven, from time to time, and borrowed all her plays from the kingdom of little children.

But, she needed not to go to heaven, since heaven was ever in her and round

about her, and that she could no more move from it than she could move from herself. She had been from her earliest years the beloved disciple of the celebrated Madam Guion; and the world, with all its concerns, its riches, and respects, had fallen off from her, as the clock fell away from the burning chariot of Elijah. She looked at nothing but her Lord in all things, she loved nothing but him in any thing. She was the sweetest playfellow that ever lived for the babe of the manger of Bethlehem; and he was, in her heart, a pleasure passing sense, as well as a peace that passed understanding. Even in conjugal endearment, her manner resigned and chastened the sense of possession, and her pudicity awed me in the midst of transport.

Our friends now prevailed upon us to accompany them in our turn to France; together with our prattling Eloisa, who was become the darling and inseparable companion of her grandmother and her uncle. We again took London in our way. I there renewed, for a while, my old acquaintanceship with my fellows in trade, and they persuaded me to join them in a petition to his Majesty, for the restoration of some of the lapsed rights of

their corporation, as your lordship may remember.

From Calais we turned, and, by long but pleasant journies, at length arrived at the Marquis's paternal seat at Languedoc, that opened a delightful prospect on the Mediterranean; and here we continued upwards of five years more, even as Adam continued in paradise, compassed in, by blifs, from the rest of the world.

During this happy period, I often pressed my dear Marquis to marry: but he would take me to his arms, and say, O my Harry, shew me but the most distant resemblance of our Louisa, and I will marry, and be blessed without delay.

In the meanwhile my angel made me the joyful father of a little son, who was also said to be the happier resemblance of his happy father. Then, though I had long disregarded the world, and all its concerns, as I saw a family increasing upon me, and also considered the poor as my appointed and special creditors, I resolved once more to return and settle my long-suspended accounts.

As for the marchioness, she protested that she could not think of parting with her little Eloisa, and that she should not be able to survive her absence ten days.

So my Louisa and I, and my little Richard, who was named after you, my lord, set out by sea, and, after a favourable voyage, arrived in England; comforted however with the promise that our friends would join us as soon as possible in Britain.

Within the ten subsequent months, we received the joyful tidings that our brother was married to the third daughter of the duke of Alençon, that they were all in the highest triumph, and would speedily be with us in a joint jubilate on the banks of the Avon.

Soon after, as my Louisa and I rode along the river, pleasing ourselves with the prospect of a speedy union with persons so dear to us, and talking and laughing away at the cares of the covetous, and the ambition of the high minded, a fowler inadvertently fired a shot behind us; and my horse, bounding aloft, plunged with me into the current, from whence however I was taken, and unwillingly reserved to years of inexpressible misery, of a misery that admitted not of a drop of consolation.

Meanwhile my love had fallen, with a shriek, from her horse, and lay senseless on the sod. Some of my people flew back, and bringing a carriage, conveyed us gently home, where my Louisa was un-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 183

dress'd and put into a bed, from whence she never rose. Her fright had given such a shock to her blood and spirits as threw her into a violent fever.

On the second day, while I sat with the physicians by her side, James put in his head and beckoned me forth. Ah, my dearest master, says he, I pray God to give you the strength and patience of Job; you have great need of them, for your calamities, like his, come all in a heap upon you. Here is a messenger dispatched from France with very heavy tidings, that my sweet young lady, your darling Eloisa, was cast away in a sloop, upon a party of pleasure, and that the good old marchioness did not outlive her five days. Then lifting my eyes to heaven, Strip, strip me, my God, I cried, to the skin, to the bone; leave, leave but my Louisa, and I will bless thy dispensations!

On the next day, my little Dicky was taken ill of a severe cold that he caught, through want of due attention during the sickness of his mother. As he was of a florid complexion, his disorder fell suddenly in an inflammation on his lungs, and, in less than twenty-four hours, he went to join his little brother and sisters in their eternity. Did I not feel these losses? Yes, yes, my friends; they wrung,

they rent my vitals. Yet I still lifted my heart in an eager prayer, and repeatedly cried, Take, take all, even the last mite; leave, leave me but my Louisa, and I will bless thee, O my Creator!

Alas, what could this avail! Can an insect arrest the motion whereby the round universe continues its course? On the fifth day I perceived that the eyes of my Louisa, the lamps of my life, began to lose their lustre. The breath, that was the balm of all my cares and concerns, grew difficult and short. The roses of my summer died away on her cheek. All agonizing, I felt and participated her changes; and she expired, while I dropt and lay senseless beside her.

I knew not what our people did with her or me afterwards. For three weeks I lay in a kind of dosing but uneasy stupor; neither do I recollect, during that period, when or whether I received any kind of sustenance.

At length I awoke to the poignancy and bitterness of my situation. I did not awake to life, but rather to the blackest gloom of the regions of death. And yet it was from this depth and enfolding of death alone, that my soul could find, or would accept an alleviation of its anguish.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 185

O earth! I cried, where is thy centre! how deeply am I sunk beneath it! How are the worms exalted over me! How much higher are the noxious reptiles that crawl upon earth! I will not accuse thee, thou great Disposer; I have had my day, the sweetest that ever was allotted to man! but O, thy past blessings serve only to enhance my present miseries, and to render me the most accursed of all thy creatures!

I then rose, and threw myself along the floor; and my faithful and valiant companions immediately gathered to me; but finding that I would not be removed, they cast themselves around me.

All light was shut out, save the glimmering of a taper; and for seven nights and seven days we dwelt in silence, except the solemn interruptions of smothered sobs and wailings.

At length my spirit reproved me. What property, said I to myself, have these people in my sufferings? or why should I burden those who love me with my afflictions? I then constrained myself, and went and took out a drawer. Here, my friends, I said, here is something that may help hereafter to dry up your tears. Divide these thousands among you; neither these

counters nor your services are now of further use. Fare ye well, fare ye well, my worthy and beloved brothers! God will give you a more gracious master, but —but—such another mistress ye never——never will find! I then took each of them to my arms, and kissed them in turns, and the house was instantly filled with heart-tearing lamentations.

I now expected and wished to be left wholly alone; but James and two domestics remained against my will. I then endeavoured to seem easy. I even struggled to appear cheerful, that I might communicate the less of grief to the voluntary sharers in my misery. O world, world! I said to myself, thou once pleasant world, we have now bid a long and eternal adieu to each other! From thee I am cut asunder, thou art annihilated to me, and we mutually reject every kind of future commerce.

Ah, how much deeper was my death than that of those in the tomb, “where the wicked cease from troubling, and “where the weary are at rest!” While I was dead to every relish of light and of life, I was wholly alive to all the gloom and horrors of the grave. The rays of the sun became an offence to my soul; the ver-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 137

ture of the fields, the whole bloom of nature was blasted and blasting to my sight ; and I wished to sink yet deeper, and to dig a lower bottom to myself of darkness and distress.

I no longer regarded what the world thought of me, or what it did to me ; and I left my hairs and my nails, even as those of Nebuchadnezzar, to grow like eagles feathers and birds claws.

My friend James, in the mean time, took a place for me in this town, in order to remove me from scenes that could only serve to perpetuate or aggravate my misery, by reminding me of the blessedness that I had once enjoyed.

He was now become my controulor. I was patient and passive to any thing, to every thing : and so he conducted me hither, I neither knew nor cared how.

In all this time, though I panted after a state of insensibility, even as a traveller, in the burning desert, thirsts after a cool and slackening stream, I never attempted to lay a violating hand on the work of my Creator. I did not even wish an alleviation of my misery, since my God had appointed that I should be so very miserable.

At length my spirit rose from its blackness to a kind of calm twilight. I called for a Bible, and, since this world was in-

188 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

capable of a drop of consolation, I wished to know if the next had any in store.

As I read, the whole of the letter, and of the facts contained therein, appeared as so many seals and veils that removed from before my eyes, and discovered depths under depths, and heavens above heavens, to my amazed apprehension. I had no vision, no revelation of these matters; but the conviction was impressed as strongly on my soul, as though an angel of God himself had revealed them to me.

How this came to pass I knew not. Homer gives to his heroes a sight into futurity, at the time that their spirits are breaking away from the shackles of flesh and blood: and it is not unlikely that the eye of the soul, when wholly turned from all carnal and earthly objects, can penetrate with the greater scope and alacrity into concerns that are merely celestial and divine.

I have now told you the whole of my dreary history, my friends, till I met with our Harry; and the rest our Harry can tell.

But Harry was in no manner of vein at present for entertaining or receiving entertainment from any one. His eyes were swelled with weeping, his spirits to-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 189

tally depressed, and getting up, as with the burden of fourscore years on his shoulders, he retired slowly and silently to his apartment.

On an evening, after coffee, as the earl stood fondly fooling with his Harry, as one child with another, he turned to Mr Clinton, and said, How came it to pass, my brother, that JESUS suffered near four thousand years to elapse, before he became incarnate for the salvation of the world, although it was by him alone that the world could be saved?

We may as well demand of God, said Mr Clinton, why he suffered near four days of creation to lapse, before he compacted yon glorious body of far-beaming light. For this matter was barely a type, and the sun himself but a shadow of the CHRIST that was to come. But did the world want light before light became incorporated in its illustrious circumscription? No, my lord, JESUS, who was from eternity the illumination of the dark immensity of nature; JESUS, who alone is the living light of spirit, soul, and sentiment, the perpetual fountain of the streams of beauty and truth. he said, LET THERE BE LIGHT! and instantly, through the darkness of a ruined world, the internity of his ever-living light kin-

dled up an externity of corporal irradiation, that has its effluence from him, and cannot beam but by him.

Now, as a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day, in the sight of God; you see that the fourth day of creation, wherein the light of this outward world was compacted into the glorious body of the sun, precisely answers to the four thousandth year, wherein JESUS, the light of eternity, was to become embodied and incarnate in Christ the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

But, as the world wanted not light before the sun opened his first morning in the east, neither did it want the means of salvation, before the blessed doctrine of MESSIAH was promulged upon earth!

All sorts of sectarians, all persons of selfish and little minds, would make a monopoly of the SAVIOUR; they would shut him up into a conventicle, and say to their God, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." But he is not so to be confined. The spirit of our JESUS bloweth wide and where he listeth; and he is at once both the Purifier and Redeemer, as well of all nations, as also of all nature.

Accordingly we see that the Turks who are wholly unblest by true religion or liberty, who live the slaves of slaves,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 191

without a form of civil government, temporally subjected to the will of a tyrant, and spiritually to the worship of a sensual imposture, yet want not the feelings of our JESUS in their heart.

Even the wild Indians, who never listened to the toll of a bell, nor ever were called into any court of civil judicature; these want not their attachments, their friendships, their family-feelings, nor the sweet compunctions and emotions of the human heart, by JESUS, forming it to DIVINE.

The truth is, that people live incomparably more by impulse and inclination, than by reason and precept. Reason and precept are not always within our beck; to have their due influence, they require frequent inculcation and frequent recollection: but impulse and inclination are more than at hand; they are within us, and, from the citadel, rule the out-works of man at pleasure.

When the apostle, speaking of CHRIST, affirms, that "there is no other name under heaven whereby a man may be saved;" and again, when he affirms that "those who have not received the law, are a law unto themselves," he intends one and the same thing. He intends that CHRIST, from the fall of man, is a PRIN-

192 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

CIPLE OF REDEMPTION in the bosoms of all living ; that he is not an outward but an inward Redeemer, working out our salvation by “ the change of our depraved “ nature ;” that in and from him alone arise all the sentiments and sensibilities that warm the heart with love, that expand it with honour, that wring it with compunction, or that heave it with the story of distant distress ; and that he alone can be qualified to be judge at the last day, who, from the first day to the last, was internally a co-operator and witness of all that ever passed within the bosoms of all men.

Hence it is, that although the Christian countries have received the two tables of the laws of Christ, his external as well as internal revelation, each witnessing to the other that the God of our gospel is the God of our nature ; the nations however, who are strangers to his name, yet acknowledge his influence, they do not indeed hear, but they feel the precepts of “ that LIGHT, which lighteth every man “ who cometh into the world.”

My dearest brother, said the earl, my conceptions are quite clear with respect to the omnipresence of Christ's divinity : but as his body is circumscribed by external features and lineaments, I can form no no-

tion of its being in several places at once: how then will it be, I pray you, at and after the last day? Will he be present to, and approachable only by a select number of his saints? or will he go certain journeys and circuits through the heavens, blessing all in rotation with his beatific presence?

Is not the body of yonder sun circumscribed, my lord? Most certainly. It is now, said Mr Clinton, at a distance of many millions of leagues from you; and yet you see it as evidently, and feel its influence as powerfully, as if it were within your reach. Nay, it is more than within your reach, it is within your existence: it supplies comfort and life to your animal body and life, and you could not survive an hour without its influence and operations.

Now, this is no other than the apt type and prefiguring promise of what Christ will be to his new-begotten in the resurrection, "when corruption shall be swallowed up of glory, and mortal of immortality." The same blessed body which for the redemption of commiserated sinners went through the shameful and bloody process of scourges, thorns, spittings, and buffetings; which hung six agonizing hours on the cross; which descended into

the grave, and thence opened the way through death into life, and through time into eternity; even this body shall then shine forth in ineffable beauty and beatitude, in essentially communicative grace and glory, thro' the height and thro' the depth, through the length and through the breadth, beaming wide beyond the universe, from infinity to infinity!

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, will then become co-embodied in this divine body; they will be the repletion of it, they will operate all things by it. To bring the Creator nearer to his creatures, the invisible Godhead will then become visible, the infinite circumscribed, the unapproachable accessible, and the incomprehensible comprehended, within the humanity of our CHRIST.

Then will his cross be exalted for an ensign to the circling, bending, and worshipping universe; his wreath of thorns will kindle all nature with the dartings and castings forth of its corruscations, and his reed of mockery will become the sceptre of unlimited domination!

From his five wounds shall be poured forth incessant floods of glory and wide-diffusing blessedness upon all his redeemed: adoring worlds, in self-abjection, shall strive to sink beneath the abjection that

became their salvation : these ever-apparent ensigns of so dearly-purchased benefits, shall inevitably attract the wills of all creatures ; they shall cause all hearts and affections to rush and cleave to him, as steel dust rushes to adamant, and as spokes stick in the nave whereon they are centered. There shall be no lapse thenceforward, no falling away, for ever ; but God in his Christ, and Christ in his redeemed, shall be a will and a wisdom, and an action and a mightiness, and a goodness and a graciousness, and a glory rising on glory, and a blessing rising on blessedness, through an ever-beginning to a never-ending ETERNITY.

O brother, brother, brother ! exclaimed the earl, I am enraptured, I am entranced.—I see it all, I feel it all. I am already, with all my corruptions, with all my transgressions, desirous of being crushed to nothing under the foot of my Redeemer. But he comforts instead of crushing me. O that I were this night, this very moment, to be dissolved, and to be with my Christ !

That night, the earl was quite happy, and pleasant, and affectionate, even beyond his custom. He said and did every thing that could be endearing to his Harry, and to his friends. He caressed them

at parting for bed. He smilingly shook hands with all the domestics that approached him; and, in the morning, was found dead, without any notice or warning to the servants who attended and lay in the room.

A sudden and grievous alarm was instantly given through the family, and quickly reached the town, and spread through the adjacent country.

Harry fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him, and wept aloud, and kissed him again, crying, My father! O my father!

And they laid his remains in a plated coffin, under escutcheons and a fable canopy of velvet. And the house and the court was circled with mourners from all parts. And they mourned for him fifty and nine days. And, on the sixtieth day, he was deposited in the family-tomb; but Mr Clinton would not permit Harry to attend the funeral of his father.

Our hero was now the master of millions, approaching to the prime of youth, glowing with health, action, and vigour, of beauty incomparable, beloved of all who knew him, and the attraction and admiration of every eye where he passed. Yet all these advantages, with all his higher accomplishments, became as matters of

no value ; they funk and sickened to his sense, while he felt a void in his bosom, eager after he knew not what, sighing he knew not why ; keen and craving in his desires, yet pining and languid in the want of possession.

What is the matter, my love, said Mr Clinton ? My dear brother died in a good old age. Such things should be expected ; we know that they must be ; and we ought not to grieve as persons who are without hope.

True, Sir, said Harry ; and yet it is a very melancholy thing for a poor man to reflect, how very rich he was a very little while ago. I lately had a dear brother, a dear mother, and the dearest of fathers ; but where are they all now ? I look round the world and see nothing but yourself therein. And—should you too——should you too—Here Harry could no more. His uncle also broke into tears, at the thoughts of parting with his darling Harry, though it were to join his Louisa.

My Harry, says he at last, we have yet two precious treasures left upon earth, if we did but know where to find them ; it is your cousin the countess of Maitland, and the brother of my Louisa the marquis D'Aubigny. Let us go in search of them,

my son. Next to my Louisa, they are the loveliest of all living. They abound in all human and divine affections, and will caress us with kindred and corresponding hearts.

Soon after, they set out for France, and, by a round-about tour of short but pleasant journeys, arrived at Paris, where Mr Clinton ordered his large retinue to his ancient inn, and, taking only two footmen, he and Harry went in their post-chaise to the marquis's palace.

On the ringing of the bell and the opening of the gate, a single domestic came forth. Mr Clinton perceived that all was dark in the hall, and this instantly gave an alarm to his ever-ready feelings.

He alighted, however, and, stepping, with his Harry, up the flight of marble, Where is your master, says he, where is my brother the marquis? Heaven bless us, cried the fellow, are you my master's brother? I have heard a deal of and about your lordship, though I never was so happy as to see your face before. Ho! he continued, and rung another bell, come all of you! attend the brother of your lord; attend the present master and lord of your household.

Immediately the palace was in commotion, the parlour and hall were lighted up,

and all seemed to have acquired a set of wings to their motions.

Mr Clinton looked with eagerness at each of the domestics, endeavouring to recollect the features of some old acquaintance, but all the faces were strange to him. Pray tell me, my friends, says he, where is your master? where and how are he and his lady? are they still in good health, has he had any children by her?

Please your honour, said an elderly man, my master's first lady died of childbirth, and her infant perished with her; but he is since married to one of the loveliest women in the world. He is gone, a year since, on an embassy into Africa; his lady would not be left behind; we lately heard from them, they are both in health; and we expect that less than a month will bring them safe to us. Indeed, the sum of our prayers is for their happy and speedy return.

What, said Mr Clinton, are there none of my old friends, not one of our ancient domestics to the fore?-----Please your lordship, Jacome, the white-headed steward is still left; but tho' in good health, he is very little more than half alive.—— Pray go and tell him that an old friend of his is here, and would be very glad to see

200 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

him; but don't do things suddenly, and be very tender and careful in bringing him to me.

Old Jacome was wheeled in, wrinkled, pale, and paralytic; and all enfeebled as he sat reclining in an easy chair, he seemed to recover life and new spirits, as they brought him forward. Bring me to him, bring me to him; my eyes are wondrous dim; bring me closer, that I may know if it is my very master indeed. Bring me but once to know that it is his sweet pardoning face, and then let me die with all my sins upon me, I care not.

Mr Clinton then took him very lovingly by the hand, My good friend Jacome, says he, we are both growing old I find; I rejoice however to see you once more upon earth. O, cried the old man, a well-known and a sweet-tuned voice is that voice; it is you then, it is you yourself, my master! Alas, for all your losses since last we parted! I have got a salt rheum in my eyes of late, and I never thought of you but it began to come down.

Here Jacome, sobbing aloud, provoked the joint tears of his attending fellow-servants; though they had never been partakers in the foregoing calamities, farther than by the ear, whence they were

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 201

now recollected and carried home to their hearts.

My lord, says Jacome at last, I am not the only one that remains of your old servants. Your Gerard too, who (blessings on his hands) once tied me neck and heels, Gerard too is forthcoming, and near at hand. Your honour's wonderful bounty made a gentleman of him at once, and he is now in a high way with a wife and three children. A hundred and a hundred times have we washed your remembrance with our tears. And indeed I think your honour ought not to send for him, lest he should suddenly die or run distracted at your sight.

In the mean time, one of the lacqueys had officiously gone and informed Gerard of the arrival of his patron. He came panting, and rushed forward, as it were, to cast himself at the feet of his lord. But stopping suddenly, and drawing back some steps, he nailed his eyes, as it were, on the face of Mr Clinton, and spreading his hands, cried :

You live then, my lord, you still live, my dearest master ! you survive all your deaths and sufferings, and the weight of ten mountains has not been able to crush you—O, the times, the times, my master, never more to return !—Will there be

such times in heaven, think you?—
will there be such angels there as we once
lived with upon earth?

Here he clapped his hands together,
and set up such a shout of bitter lamentation,
as was enough to split the heart
of every hearer, and, in a manner, to
split the graves of the persons whom he
deplored.

As soon as Mr Clinton and his two old
friends had parted for the night, Tell
me, my dear Sir, said Harry, are there
different kinds of grief; or is it merely
that grief affects us in different ways?

When I wept for my dear father, my
mother, and brother, my affliction was
anguishing and altogether bitter, without
any species of alleviating sensation to
compensate my misery. But it was far
otherwise with me to-night: when I grieved
in the grief of your old and faithful
domestics, I felt my heart breaking, but
I was pleased that it should break; I felt
that it was my happiness so to grieve; and
I could wish a return of the same sweet
sensations.

The reason is this, my love; when you
lamented your parents, you lamented
yourself in your private and personal
losses; your affliction was just, it was natural,
it was laudable: but still it was con-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 203

fined; it participated but little of the emotion that is excited by the affliction of others: and the anguish was the keener; by being nearly limited to your own bosom and your own concerns.

But in the griefs of my old and loving servants this night, you became wholly expanded; you went beyond, you went out of yourself: you felt, without reflection, how delightful it is to go forth, with your God, in his social, generous, noble, and divine sensibilities; and you delightfully felt, my Harry, that such a house of mourning is more joyous to your soul than all the festivals that flesh and sense can open before you.

And now, my child, I will finally, and once for all, lay open the very horrible and detestable nature of SELF in your soul.

SELF appears to us as the whole of our existence; as the sum total of all, in which we are interested or concerned. It is as a NARCISSUS, self-delighted, self-enamoured. It desires, it craves, and claims, as its right, the loves, attachments, and respects of all mankind. But does it acquire them, my Harry? O, never, never. SELF never was beloved, never will be beloved, never was honourable or respectable in the eye of any creature.

And the characters of the patriot, the hero, the friend, and the lover, are only so far amiable, so far reverable, as they are supposed to have gone forth from the confines of SELF.

As Mr Clinton proposed to wait the return of the Marquis, he employed the mean season in endeavours to amuse his darling, and to dispel the cloud of melancholy that continued to hang over him.

For this purpose, he went with him to Versailles, and to the many other elegant environs of Paris. He also shewed him the Thuilleries, and other public walks, where our hero became oppressed by his involuntary attraction of all eyes upon him.

One night happening to go to the play, without the company of his guardian, as he came forth with the crowd, a carriage was opened for him; which he took to be his own, and in he stepped, and away he was taken.

In the mean time, Mr Clinton waited supper for him, and began to grow uneasy when the clock struck twelve. At last his carriage and servants returned with tidings that they staid for him, above an hour, at the theatre, after the play was over; and had ever since been in search of him, to no purpose.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 205

Though Mr Clinton was, by nature, of an intrepid spirit, and was still more assured by his reliance on Providence, he yet found himself agitated in a very alarming manner. He therefore retired to his closet, and there, on his knees, fervently commended his Harry to the protection of his God.

At length the clock struck three. Soon after, the bell was heard from the hall ; and Harry entering, with a page in a rich livery, flew like lightning up stairs, and cast himself into the bosom of his patron.

My father, my father ! he cried, I have been in sad panics for you. I knew the love that you bore to your good-for-nothing Harry. But indeed I could not help it. I could not get to you till this instant. I have been a prisoner, Sir, and here is my deliverer.

As soon as they were something composed, and all seated, Harry proceeded to satisfy the impatience of his uncle.

As I came out of the theatre, ruminating on a passage in one of Racine's tragedies, I found a chariot in the spot where I had left my own, and stepping heedlessly into it, I was soon set down, and hastening through the great hall, flew up stairs to salute you. But think how I was sur-

prised, when I suddenly found myself in the most sumptuous chamber perhaps in the universe. It was wainscotted with mirrors of the most perfect polish, whose plates were artfully buttoned and buckled together by diamonds, and other gems of a most dazzling lustre.

All astonished, I recoiled, and was going to withdraw, when I was met by a lady who gracefully accosted me: Have you commands, Sir, says she, for any one in this house?—A thousand pardons, madam, I perceive my error! I really thought I was set down at my own lodgings.—No great offence, Sir; but now that I look at you again, I think you ought to pay the forfeit of your intrusion, by giving me one hour of your company at least.—You must excuse me, Madam, my guardian would be under the most terrifying alarms for me.—A fig for guardians, she cried! you are now my prisoner; and nothing less than my friend Lewis, with his army at his back, shall be able to take you out of my hands.

So saying, she rung a bell, and immediately a folding-door of pannelled looking-glass flew open, and shewed us to another apartment; where a supper, composed of all the elegancies of the season,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 207

was served up, as by magic, and lay fuming on the table.

She then took me by the hand, and, having graciously seated me, placed herself opposite. A number of servants then vanished on the instant, leaving a dumb waiter of silver behind them.

Sir, said she, we are not to have any further company. You alone were expected, you alone are desired, all others are forbidden. In short, I have seen you often at the public walks and theatres. You did more than strike my fancy, you laid hold on my heart. I enquired every thing about you. I know your rank, title, and fortune. I made use of this night's stratagem to decoy you to me; and, though there are few women in Europe of equal opulence or dignity, I think I cannot much demean myself by an alliance with a sweet fellow whom I so ardently love. But come, our supper cools.

I gazed at her with admiration. She was indeed the most finished beauty I ever beheld. And I was inwardly flattered, and in a manner attached to her, by her partiality in my favour.

After supper, and some futile and insignificant chat, she drew her chair nearer to me. What say you, my lord, says she, fondly; am I to live, or to perish?

Ah, madam, I cried, love is as a little bird, if you cage it, it will beat itself to pieces against its prison. Not that I regard your late threats of confinement ; my own arm is at all times sufficient to deliver me from your thralldom ; but in truth I am partly become a willing prisoner to you ; and time may possibly reconcile me to your different customs.

What customs, I pray you ? Why, madam, the ladies in my country use no paint except the rouge of nature's blush, and the paleness of chastity. Love also, in England, is a kind of warfare between the sexes, just such as once happened between the Parthians and old Rome ; our ladies conquer by flying, and our men are vanquished while they pursue.

Persons, Sir, of a certain rank, said she, are dispensed with from conforming to little matters of decorum. However, if you will endeavour to adopt the manners of my country, I will do my best, on my part, to conform to those of your's.

So saying, she looked languishingly at me, and drew her chair quite close ; when, by an involuntary motion, I put mine further back. Don't be alarmed, my lord, says she ; women of my condition know always where to stop. Right, madam, said I, but possibly you might

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 209

not be quite so successful in teaching me where to be stopped.

Cold constitutioned boy! she cried, (indignantly rising and colouring,) your bed lies yonder; you may go to it, if you like, and ruminate till morning on the danger of slighting and insulting a princess. So saying, she swept haughtily out of the room, and locked me in.

During an hour after she had withdrawn, while I walked about, considering what I had to apprehend from the threats of this extraordinary woman, I heard a great bustling in and about the palace; but, within another hour, all was quiet and still again.

I then conceived thoughts of attempting my escape; but again, I held it beneath me to be caught in the manner; and so I resolved to wait till morning, and then to force my passage through her guards in open day.

In the mean time, I imagined that a pannel in the wainscot stirred. And, soon after, it was removed, and my young friend here entered my chamber on tip-toe. He beckoned me to silence, and, taking me by the hand, he led me through the way by which he came.

We then descended a narrow pair of back-stairs, and, groping along a dark

210 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

entry, he cautiously unbolted a door that opened into a garden ; and hurrying with me across, he unlocked another door that opened to the street, and out we got, rejoicing !

Soon after, we met a party of the guards, who were patrolling the streets ; and, putting a few pieces into their hand, I requested their safe convoy, and they conducted us home.

My lords, said Perre, (for that was the page's name,) it would be extremely dangerous for you to remain another day, or even till morning in Paris. The princess is the most intimate friend of Madam Maintenon, and through her can do what she pleases with the king. During my residence with her, she grew tired of two handsome lovers, in succession ; but they told no tales, and no one can yet tell what became of them.

Mr Clinton was quite of Perre's opinion. He instantly sent for his people. All was hurry, pack, and dispatch, and, toward dawning, they set out on a road that led to the Cantons. But, changing their course again, for several successive mornings, they arrived at Calais by a long tour of near five weeks travel.

Mr Clinton set up at his old inn, and after dinner the host entered to pay his

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 211

compliments. Have you any news, landlord? Nothing at present, my lord, all is quiet again. But here has been a fearful bustle about three weeks ago. The king's army came down, in pursuit of a young Englishman who ran away with a lady of quality from Paris. For my share, continued he, looking earnestly at Harry, I fear that you, pretty English lads, will hardly leave us a lovely wench in the nation. Harry looked quite secure, being wholly innocent of any present design on the sex, but poor little Perre turned as pale as the table-cloth.

I remember, continued our talkative host, that just such another affair happened when I was a boy and servant in this house. Here came a young Englishman, just such another sweet fellow as this before me, and he brought with him an angel of a creature, the like of whom my eyes never did, nor ever shall open upon till they close in death. After him came one of our great dukes, with a party of the king's army, and terrible things were expected. But they made it up in a manner I know not how; and my lord Anglois carried off his prize in triumph! Mr Clinton stooped his head, and dropt a silent tear, but held no further converse with our landlord on the subject.

212. THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

That evening a gale sprung up, and going on board, they were safe anchored, before morning, in the bay of Dover.

They then mutually embraced; and Harry catching his beloved deliverer to his bosom, We are now upon English ground, says he; welcome to my arms, my dear Perre, no longer my page or servant, but my friend and my brother! you cannot conceive what pain your officiousness has hitherto cost me, but there must be no more of this. You shall hereafter be served and attended as I am; nay, I myself will gladly serve you to the utmost of my power, and the extent of my fortune.

Ah, my lord, cried the lovely Perre, gently falling at the feet of his master, if you deprive me of the pleasure of serving you, you deprive me of all the pleasure that the world can afford me. If you knew the delight I find in being always about you, in watching your thoughts and motions, in looking into your fine eyes, and there reading your desires before they rise to expression, you could not find in your heart to deprive me of such a blessing. Well then, said Harry, raising him fondly in his arms, our future contest shall be, which of us shall serve the other with most affection and sedulity.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 213

After dinner, the evening being calm and shiny, Harry took his Perre with him along the shore that stretches under the stupendous cliffs of Dover. They had not walked far, when, getting out of the sight of people, within the winding of a creek, a man advanced toward them, and, taking out a pistol, called to Harry, and ordered him to throw down his purse. Our hero did not regard his purse; but thinking it an indignity to be robbed by one man, he put his hand to his sword. Hereupon the villain cocked and levelled his pistol; and the faithful Perre, observing that he was going to fire, instantly jumped in between his master and danger, and received the ball into his own bosom.

Harry saw his darling drop, and, flying all enraged at the robber, he ran him thrice through the body, and pinned him to the ground. Then, flying as swiftly back, he threw himself by the side of his dying Perre, and gently raising his languishing head, placed it fondly on his bosom.

You are wounded, my friend, dangerously wounded I fear, says Harry! Yes, my lord, I am wounded just as I could wish; and I would not exchange my present blessed death, for the longest and happiest life that the world could bestow.

214 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

But it is time to undeceive you, and reveal a secret, which nothing but death should ever have extorted from me.—— I am not what I seem, my most beloved master!———I am a foolish and fond girl, who, at the first glance, conceived a passion for you——My name is Maria de Lausanne.——I am niece to that bad woman whom you justly rejected.——But what did I propose by this disguise? First your deliverance, my lord, and that I effected.———But, did I further aspire to the honour of your hand? Far from it, far from it I felt my own unworthiness; I did not think you could be mated by any thing less than an angel.——But then to see you, to hear you, to serve, to touch, to be near you, to fix my eyes on you unheeded, and, if possible, to win your attention by the little offices of my fondness, this was my happiness, the whole of the heaven that I proposed upon earth———I have had it, I have enjoyed it——and I ought to die content——But, alas, to part from you, there is the pang of pangs!———O, if this day merits any thing, by the offer of my own life for the preservation of my beloved———then cause my chaste clay to be kindly deposited in the tomb of your ancestors; that when time shall

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 215

come-----my dust may be neighboured to your precious dust, and there sleep in peace---beside you---till we spring---together---from corruption---to glory and ---immortality!

During these short sentences and difficult respirations, Harry could answer nothing---He was suffocated by his grief.

But, putting his speechless lips to the fading lips of his Maria, he drew her latest breath into his own affectionate bosom, and angels instantly caught her spirit into the regions of purity, of love, and of faith unfailing!

Harry, then, plucking up strength from oppression, and courage from despair, pressed his lips to the pale and unfeeling lips of his lover, and cried, Yes, my Maria, our dust shall be joined, and I feel that our spirits too shall shortly be wedded.-----Then, raising her in his arms, and pressing her to his bosom, he bore her to the town, while he poured upon her all the way the two fountains of his affection.

When he got to the inn, and came to his uncle; Here, Sir, said he, I present you with a very precious little burthen, a burthen that lies much heavier on my heart than it did in my arms. He then related to Mr Clinton the whole of what

216 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

had passed; when, heavily sighing, and shedding a tear, Mr Clinton cried, Ah, my Harry, I would to heaven that your Maria had lived! her beauty, her services, but above all, the excess of her love, made her truly deserving of you.

Harry ordered a carriage, on purpose, for himself and his beloved. She was deposited in a coffin hurried up for the occasion; and, notwithstanding all the remonstrances and intreaties of his parent, Harry proved a rebel, for the first time, and would not be divided from his Maria, till they reached London.

There our Harry ordered a coffin of unalloyed and beaten silver to be prepared for her reception. And though near five days had passed since the departure of her spirit, her chaste flesh remained as pure and untainted as that of a lamb newly slain.

While they were putting her into her solemn repository, Ah, Sir, said Harry, I pretend not to compare with you; your losses, I own, have been greater than mine. You are a man, like your divine Master, wholly made up of sorrows and acquainted with killing griefs. But still you must allow, that, for my little time, I have had a competent share. It matters not. I am reconciled to them. I begin

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 217

to be pleased with them. And indeed joy is become my utter aversion, while I think on this loved creature who willingly bled and died for my sake.

As Harry thought it his duty, so he thought it would be his delight, to weep and lament his Maria for ever. But passions seldom are permanent; and time, though it may not wholly efface, daily wears away an insensible portion of the deepest impressions.

Harry caused the coffin of his deliverer to be exalted on a cabinet in his bed-chamber, that it might be always in his sight. But the familiarity of affecting objects daily lessens their force; and Harry, week after week, began to contemplate the repository of the loved remains of his Maria with abating affliction.

In the mean time, Mr Clinton received a letter by the French mail, in answer to one which he had left for his brother-in-law at Paris; and this letter informed him, under the marquis's hand, that he had returned from his embassy to the court of Morocco, and that he and his lady would be shortly in England. And, at the the bottom, he found written, in a different character, "Will it be any satisfaction to see them accompanied by your once loved——FANNY GOODALL?"

We have found them, my Harry, he cried, we have found them, our long and far-sought friends! the two treasures which our God had graciously laid in store for the comfort of us poor people who have lost all beside! But don't let us do them the disgrace, my son, of meeting and receiving them with tears and dirges. Let me then prevail upon you to permit your faithful Perre to be conducted by some of our people, with an honourable train of undertakers, to Enfield, and there to be treasured up in your family-vault, where I shall speedily join her, and whereunto even my Harry must finally adjourn.—Harry wiped his eye, and said, Be it as you please, my father!

Within the following fortnight, Harry, attended by his page, put on a footman-like frock, and gripping his quarterstaff, of polished yew, took a walk toward the customhouse, to inquire if any French vessels had lately arrived, in hope of tidings respecting the marquis and the countess of Maitland.

As he approached the wharf, he observed a crowd all in motion, and shouting as in the midst of some affray. Immediately he hastened up, and making way through the savage populace, perceived that they were insulting, beating, and

dragging a number of unhappy foreigners, without any apparent provocation, save that their garb, complexion, and language, were different from their own; the very reason that should have induced them to have treated these abused strangers with courtesy and kindness.

On the instant his humanity was at once melted by compassion, and fired into rage; while a lady, who stood with her women on the stairs, cried out in accents of the bitterest distress, One hundred, two hundred, five hundred pounds, to any who will save my poor people.

In little more than twenty seconds, Harry laid near as many of the assailing mob maimed or sprawling on the area; and advancing on the crowded spectators, with a threatful and agile whirl of his staff, they fell back in a hurry upon each other, and dispersing, left our hero peaceable master of the field of battle.

Then turning to the bruised and bleeding strangers, he raised some, and supporting others, conducted them all to the feet of their lady.

While he approached, she eyed him over and over in mute and wondering astonishment. I think myself happy, Madam, says he, in having done some small service to a lady of your fair and

noble appearance. Of what country, may I presume? of England, Sir, says she; and I am ready to present you with five thousand pounds, in recompence of the gallant, the miraculous rescue, you so seasonably brought to me and my people.

No, Madam, said Harry smiling; my circumstances do not lay me under the smallest temptation of setting any instance of humanity to sale. But I shall not be easy, till I see you and your attendants safe out of the reach of these London barbarians.

He then called to some porters, and throwing them a parcel of silver, ordered them to bring all the coaches they could muster. And go you, says he to his page, go to the shipping, enquire after the friends that I told you of, and then follow me to the White-cross tavern in Cheapside.

The coaches came, and Harry assisted his porters in carrying, helping, and gently stowing the maimed and the wounded into some of them. He then handed in the lady; and next, coming to a black-moor boy, who had a coronet of diamonds inserted in his cap, he offered to lift him in. But the youth, bending one knee to the dust, and seizing on Harry's hand, eagerly and repeatedly kissed it,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 221

erying out, in French, Heavenly, heavenly creature! and then, breaking into tears, he sprung into the coach, and sat down by the lady.

Our hero then bestowed the four female attendants, with such luggage as was brought on shore, into the remaining coaches. Then, grasping his quarter-staff, and ordering the porters to attend, he guarded and escorted all safe to the White-cross.

The first thing he then did was to order private apartments for the lady and her attendants. He next dispatched the waiters for all the surgeons in the neighbourhood. He then locked the room where he saw the luggage safe lodged; ordered a sumptuous dinner to be prepared as soon as possible; and, lastly, discharged the coaches and porters, who poured their parting blessings upon his head; and all this he did with wonderful dispatch; for Harry was now in the wide element of his beneficence, as a whale in the ocean.

Three surgeons then came, and our hero, putting five guineas a piece into their hands, desired them to examine and dress their patients; and staid till he heard the delightful tidings that none of them were incurable. He then sent up to the lady.

to desire permission to attend her. She rose and met him as he entered. Child of heaven, said she, from which of the orders of angels have you descended? I have heard as well as seen what you have wonderfully done for us. Madam, said Harry, endeavouring to turn the discourse, I would not advise you to remove your people for some time: I have ordered beds and apartments for them in this house; where those that are tolerably well, may assist the doctors to attend their sick fellows till all shall be restored. In the mean time, I have sent to my father's for his coach and chariot, to convey you, and this young gentleman, and your women, to our house, where you can want for no servants, since my father and I, and all, will be truly and tenderly your servants. We are your property, Sir, said the lady, dispose of us as you please.

In a little time after, dinner was served up, and Harry, happening to turn his head, perceived the black youth by stealth kissing the hat, and pressing the gloves to his bosom that he had laid on a table.

Whatever the darkness or deformity of any aspect or person may happen to be, if the sentimental beauty of soul shall burst through the cloud upon us, the dark becomes light, the deformed quite comely,

and we begin to love what was lately our aversion. Thus it was that Harry found himself suddenly and inevitably attached by the two recent proofs that this outlandish youth had given of his affection.

Being all seated, Harry looked earnestly at the young Moor, and turning to the lady, said, I now perceive, Madam, how ridiculous all sorts of prejudices are, and find that time and observation may change our opinions to the reverse of what they were. I once had an aversion to all sorts of blacks; but I avow that there is something so amiable in the face of this youth, and his eyes cast such a lustre over the darkness of his countenance, as is enough, as Shakespeare has it, to make us in love with night, and pay no more worship to the gaudy sun.

The Moor, heret, smiled celestial sweetness, and joy beamed from his eyes, and throughout his dimpling aspect.

But who can you be, my sweet fellow, said the lady, who are the picture, the image, almost the thing itself, that I was so sadly in love with five and thirty years ago? Why, Madam, said our hero, you could not have been born at that early day. Ah, you flatterer, says she, I am turned of forty. But pray, Madam, who was he that was so happy as to attract your

infant affections?——His name was Harry Clinton.——Why, madam, Harry Clinton is my name.——Harry Clinton! Harry Clinton! screamed out the lady, and started up from her chair.——Yes, madam, I am son to the late earl of Moreland; and I almost dare to hope that you were once the enchanting Fanny Goodall.——Yes, my lovely kinsman, I am indeed your Fanny Goodall!

Harry then sprung forward, and seizing her hand, kept it dwelling on his lips. But disengaging it, she opened her arms, and clasped him to her bosom, and wept over him as a mother would over a long-lost son; while the young Moor ran and danced about the room like a mad thing, clapping hands, and springing, like an antelope, almost to the ceiling.

When they were something composed, the Moor caught the lady about the neck, and kissing her, cried, Joy, joy my dearest madam, the greatest of all joys! Then turning to our hero, he took each of his hands in turns, and pressed them to his lips; while Harry, kissing his forehead, cried, My brother, my brother!

When they were again set to dinner, the page entered. My lord, says he, I have been all along the quays and the shipping, but can learn no tidings of the marquis.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 225

D'Aubigny, nor of any French family, save that of the duchess Bouillon, who, this morning, came up the river with a numerous train.

Well, says Harry, our happiness has been already quite sufficient to the day. To-morrow may crown our wishes with full success.

No, my love, said the lady, you cannot see the marquis for some time. The truth is, that you find in me, your Fanny Goodall, the marchioness D'Aubigny, and the duchess de Bouillon. But these matters shall be explained more clearly, when I am blessed with the sight of your precious uncle.

News was now brought that the carriages were at the door; when, taking a hasty bit or two, they visited and left orders for the care of the sick and wounded, and then set out in a hurry for Pall-Mall.

When they arrived, the duchess hastening in, enquired for Mr Clinton; and, when she came where he was, she cried out, as she advanced, and as he rose to receive her, your Fanny, your Fanny Goodall, my cousin; and throwing herself into his arms, dwelt there for a minute. Then recoiling a while, she looked fondly at him and cried, Your sister also, my brother,

your sister D'Aubigny! the wife of the brother of your heavenly Louisa! then clasping him to her arms, she broke into tears; and again, quitting him, sat down to quiet her emotions.

Mr Clinton, having seated himself affectionately beside her, said, These are wondrous things that you tell me, my precious sister! by what miracle have these blessings been brought about?

I am too much agitated at present, says she; let me have a little coffee, and the matter shall be unravelled.

As they were settling to the tea-table, Give me leave, Sir, said the duchess, to introduce my little black companion to your notice. He is a sweet fellow, I assure you, notwithstanding his complexion. He is child to our royal friend the emperor of Morocco, who has intrusted him to our guardianship for his travel and education. However he might have come by his sable outside, his father, the great Abenamin, is the least of the tawny of any man I saw in Africa, and his mother is one of the fairest and finest women that ever opened a pair of living diamonds to the light; but she took fright, while she was pregnant, at the sudden sight of a blackamoor. But, my brother, I shall more particularly recommend him to your regard, by tell-

ing you that he is an exceedingly pious Christian, though as playful as lambs, and as chuckling as infancy.

She then turned, and, taking the little Abenamin by the hand, led him up and placed him before her brother ; when the youth, suddenly dropping on his knees, looked up to Mr Clinton, with eyes that spoke love and reverential awe, and besought his blessing.

The old gentleman found himself surprisingly affected, and, lifting up his hands, cried, God be gracious to you, my child, and make your soul as bright as your countenance is fable ! and may the Sun of righteousness shine with power upon you, and soon disperse or illumine every shade that is about you ! The prince embraced his legs, kissed his knees, and arose.

Soon as the coffee was removed, You may remember, my dearest cousin, said the duchess, in what a hurry I last parted from you. Mr Fairface, with whom the bulk of my fortune was deposited, went off with above a hundred thousand pounds of my substance, beside four times that value entrusted to him by others.

I traced him to Paris, and there he had the impudence to give me an interview ;

but at the same time had the impudence also to bid me defiance.

Immediately I commenced suit, and sent dispatch to London for my papers and witnesses.

On the opening of my cause in court, I was summoned by the title of Countess of Maitland, otherwise Frances Goodall. On hearing the name, a gentleman who was near me started, and turning and coming up, Pray, madam, says he, are you any way related to the honourable Harry Clinton, who once went by that name in this city? I am, Sir, said I, almost the nearest relation that he has upon earth.—He is, madam, my dearest friend and brother. Pray, speak to your advocates to postpone your suit for a few days, till I am informed of the nature and merits of your cause.

This was accordingly done. He desired to know where I lodged, and in less than an hour his chariot was at my door.

Except yourself, my cousin, the marquis had the most lovely and winning aspect and person that ever I beheld. I soon convinced him of the equity of my demand, and of the villainy of my trustee, and made him perfect master of the whole affair. But he still continued to visit and to stay with me a considerable part of

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 229

every day, under colour of being better informed touching this and the other particular; the remaining time was spent in soliciting for me.

At length a hearing came on; and, after a short trial, honest Fairface was cast in principal and double costs. He was instantly taken into custody, and put under confinement, till he discharged the whole amount of the judgment in my favour.

No sooner was our suit over, wherein I was plaintiff, but another was commenced, wherein I happened to prove but a very weak defendant. The marquis now became solicitor for himself, but with such a sweet timidity, as seemed to doubt, and greatly dreaded the success of his cause.

I could not refuse my time to him, who had devoted the whole of his time and assiduity to me. We spent whole days together. But O what floods of tears did that time often cost both him and me, while he pathetically and feelingly related your history from the place where you broke off, to the death of your Louisa and your precious infants!

I believe, my cousin, that, as grief is a greater softener, so it is a greater cementer of hearts than any other passion. I gave the marquis, in my turn, my little

story, and dwelt on every tender minuteness of my infant-passion for you. Ah, said he, what a pity that a heart, so susceptible of all divine and human feelings, should sit as a lonely turtle upon the house top, without a suitable mate!

I took him for that mate, my cousin; and in a husband I found the truest and tenderest of lovers. I became pregnant, for the first time of my life, and was delivered of a sweet and promising little fellow, whom we left at nurse in our country seat, while I attended my lord on his embassy to Morocco.

But here I must stop, my brother; I am under the positive interdiction of an imperial thing called a husband, not to divulge a word further till he sees you face to face. But I trust that he has blessed tidings for you, my brother; he says, that he otherwise would not have dared to present himself before you after his loss of your Eloisa.

Mr Clinton smiled careless, as at the impossibility of any consoling event upon earth. Again smiling archly, I protest, my sister, said he, you appear to me to grow younger for your years. I see no manner of alteration, save that you are something plumper, and not quite so slender as when we parted. O, says she,

laughing, there may be a reason in nature for that.

I rejoice at heart to hear it, said Mr Clinton; but pray when may we expect my brother?—In about two months; at present he is engaged with the king, who is extremely fond of him, and lately created him a duke, on account of the services which he rendered the state in Africa. We received your dear letter, my dearest brother, at Paris; but wondered who the sweet fellow could be who was said to accompany you.

In the mean time, our hero and the young prince were in close combination. Abenamin stepped about and about Harry, and toyed with him, and twisted the curls of his careless locks around his fingers. Then turning and looking fondly up in his face, Ah, how fair, says he, does this black visage of mine shew in those fine eyes of your's! It is in truth, said Harry, so fair in my eyes, that I would not exchange it for fifteen of the fairest female faces in Britain. The prince then caught his hand, and pressed it to his bosom. But what shall I call you, says he? You are a great lord in this country, and in my own country I am greater than a lord. But I hate the formality of titles between friends, and I will call you my Harry,

provided you promise to call me your Abenamin. A bargain, says Harry, let us seal it with a kiss! No, no, says the prince, we never kiss lips in Africa; but I will kiss your head, and your hands, and your feet too, with pleasure. But tell me, Harry, what makes you so mighty clever a fellow; will you teach me to be a clever fellow also? Ay, that I will, says Harry; and to beat myself too, provided you promise not to hit me over hard. Abenamin laughed, and aimed a little fist, as though he meant to overturn him.

As soon as Harry's grief for his late Maria would allow him to associate, he had been to seek his old friend and tutor Mr Clement; but he found only a single domestic at home, who told him that the old gentleman had been some time dead, and that the family were lately gone to take possession of a new seat that they had purchased in the country.

However, as Harry found himself quite happy in the present society, he sought no further acquaintance or amusement in London. In less than three weeks, the retinue of the prince and the duchess were well restored; and they all set out for Enfield, there to await the wished arrival of the duke.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 233

On the third day, while they stopped at a village to repair the fractured harness of an over mettled horse, Harry took a walk with his Abenamin along the road. In their way they came to a long and waste cottage, where they heard the confused clattering of junior voices. Harry stepped to the door, and looking in, perceived about forty or fifty boys ranged on benches of turf, while a man of a pale aspect sat on a decayed chair, instructing them in their lessons.

Your servant, Sir, says Harry; pray what language do you teach?——I can teach Latin and Greek too, Sir; but the people of this country choose to confine themselves to the language of old England——If I am not too free, Sir, pray what is your name?—Longfield, so please your honour.——Longfield! Longfield! I have surely heard that name before. Pray were you ever acquainted with a man called Hammel Clement?——Hammel Clement, Sir! Yes, Sir; and with a wife by whom he is greatly dignified.

Your friend Clement, says Harry, is come to great fortune; and, I dare answer for him, would be nearly distracted with joy at your sight, and would gladly divide his substance with you; but, if you please, you shall be no incumbrance.

upon his growing family. You shall instantly come with me; and, as Pharaoh said to Jacob, Regard not your stuff, for the good of all my lands lies before you, my Longfield. And I rejoice more in acquiring such a heart as your's, than if I had acquired the possession of a province.

Harry then called a few of the neighbours in, and giving them some guineas, to be changed and divided among the children, in order to enable them to see a new master, he and Abenamin took the thread-bare Longfield, on each side, under the arm, and carried him away.

When they came to the turn that led to the mansion-house, Harry perceived, with much pleasure, that the two school-houses, which he had put in hand before the death of his father, were now completed. They stood opposite to each other, with the road between them. Their fronts were of hewn stone; and a small cupola rose over each, with bells to summon the children to meals and to lesson.

Here, Longfield, says our hero, is to be your province. You are to superintend these schools at a salary of three hundred a-year: And I will soon send you, with proper means throughout the country, to muster me a hundred chosen children of

each sex: for I yearn to be a father, Longfield, and to gather my family of little ones under my eye and my wing.

As soon as they alighted, Mr Clinton and his Harry once more welcomed the duchess and her Abenamin to their home, and their hearts and the late house of mourning became a house of joy.

Above all, Abenamin inspired mirth and good humour throughout the family; and melancholy fled before him wherever he turned. He was daily inventive of new matters of entertainment. He danced African dances for them, with wonderful action and grace; and he sung African songs, that imitated and exceeded the wild and inarticulate warblings of the nightingale; so that he became the darling and little idol of the whole household.

Harry had sent for the town-tailor, and got Longfield fitted with three or four suits from his father's wardrobe. He then sent him on his commission, in company with Mr Trusty the agent, whom he ordered to shew him the country, to introduce him to the several families of the peasantry, and to furnish him with whatever sums he should call for.

In the mean time, our hero and Abenamin became inseparable. He made the prince a present of his little dressed jenner,

and at times rode out with him, and taught him the menage. At other times they would run, and wrestle, and play a hundred gambols through the walks and the gardens.

Did you ever see the chase of the antelope, Harry?—Not I truly.—You shall not be long so, says the prince. Go, gather me all the house, man, woman, and child, before the door here. You shall be the huntsman, and I will be the antelope; and if any of your people can catch me, in a mile's running, they shall have my cap for a kerchief.

Immediately the whole posse was summoned, to the amount of about sixty persons, male and female; and Mr Clinton and the duchess, hearing what they were about, came laughing to the door to see the diversion.

Harry then gave his royal antelope about fifty yards law; then cried, Away! and instantly all heels and all voices were loosed after him.

The prince then turned, and bounded over an aha that was sunk on the right side of the avenue; then, clearing several other obstacles, whereby he threw out the greatest number of his pursuers, he at length reached the fields, and shot away like an ~~an~~ arrow.

Our hero's huntsman headed about nine foreign and domestic footmen, who still held the chace, though at a distance ; while Abenamin led them a round of above a mile. Then, turning short homeward, he came flying up the avenue, with only the huntsman and two followers puffing far behind. At length, reaching near the door, the prince threw himself precipitately into the arms of his friend, as it were for protection, crying, Save me, my Harry, save your little antelope !

Mr Clinton and the duchess then successively embraced the victor, and wished him joy. I protest, Harry, cried Mr Clinton, I will bett a thousand pieces with you, on the head of my Abenamin against your famous Polly Truck.

That night, as our hero sat with the prince in his apartment, Have you ever been in love, my Harry, says he ? I confess, said Harry, that I have had my twitches and tendencies that way.

He then related to him the tragedy of his faithful Maria, which cost the prince the drenching of a handkerchief in tears.

Ah, exclaimed the prince, never, never will I forgive your Maria her death ! why was it not my lot, by some severer doom, to prove to you the superiority of my friendship and affection ? What, cried

238 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Harry, would you not leave me a single companion upon earth? When my Abenamin quits the world, I shall also bid it adieu!

When tears were wiped away, the prince took his friend by the hand, and said, I have a sister, my brother, a sister, twinned with me in the womb, and as fair as I am black. All Africa is pleased to hail her as the beauty of the universe; but the truth is, that I think but poorly of her. The duke brought her with him to France; and should he bring her to England, beware of your heart, my Harry! for, though I am prejudiced against her, she is the idol of all others, who bow down to her, as before a little divinity. This has made her so excessively vain, that she holds herself of a different species from the rest of mankind, and thinks the homage of the world nothing less than her right. And now, my Harry, though I earnestly wish to be allied to you by a tie, nearer if possible than that of friendship, yet I would not wish my own happiness at the expence of your peace; and so I give you timely warning against this dangerous and haughty girl.

Our company had now been upward of six weeks at the mansion house. Harry hitherto, had never examined any part of

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 239

the country, or any part of his own estate, above a mile from the house. Wherefore, leaving his friend Abenamin in bed, in the presumption of his being tired with his last day's fatigue, he issued early forth, accompanied only by his huntsman and his agent's runner, who knew and was known every where.

With their staves in their hands, they crossed and quartered the country at pleasure, without let or obstacle.

At length they came within prospect of a house sumptuously fronted, and of a happy situation. Harry stopped here, with pleasure, comparing, as he approached, the acquirements of art with the advantages of nature; when a servant issued forth, and humbly besought him to walk in. Harry heard the voice of music. What is your master's name, says he? Fielding, so please your honour, and we are this day celebrating the nuptials of his son, the young squire.

The master of the family met our hero at the outward door. Harry recoiled at recognizing the face of the Mr Fielding whom he had seen at Hampstead; but, taking no notice, walked with him into the house.

Breakfast, soon after, was ushered in, and Mrs Fielding and Mr and Mrs

Catharines, and Ned, with his blooming and blushing bride, came to the table.

Harry chuckled and rejoiced at heart, but still took no notice; when, after some cursory conversation, Ned looked at him with an eager disturbance, and cried, Bless me, my heart tells me that there is something in that face which is not quite unknown to me. If I could think, after my many and late enquiries, that my patron was alive, bating the difference of years, I should verily believe that you were—— Your Harry Fenton, cried our hero, springing up; your Harry Fenton, my dear Ned!

Harry then opened his arms to receive his friend, while Ned leaped and caught at him, as the grappling iron of a corsair would catch at a ship from which great prize was expected.

All the family then, so highly as they had been obliged by our hero and his father, struggled who should be foremost in their acknowledgments and careffes. The holy Catharines, fondly taking him to his arms, cried, Christ be gracious to you, my child! and may the God, who has formed you as an angel upon earth, make you also of the highest order of angels in heaven!

After dinner, Harry rose to take his leave; but they all got in a group and opposed his passage, telling him he must be their prisoner for that night. I consent, only on this condition, said Harry, that you all promise to dine with me to-morrow. Why, pray Sir, where do you live, says Mr Fielding? at Enfield, with the young Earl of Moreland, says Harry; but he has a great friendship for me, and the house is as it were my own.

Much company arrived in the evening, and the ball was opened and held till late. But our hero declined dancing, that his friend Ned might stand forth peerless in the eyes of his bride.

Harry rose by the dawning, and footed it in an hour to Enfield. He flew up stairs to salute the family, but found no one, save Mr Clinton, from whom he received at once a warm blessing and embrace.

Where is the duchess, Sir, and my friend Abenamin? Gone, Harry, says his uncle, about breakfast-time yesterday; a courier arrived with the joyful tidings that my brother was on the road, and so my sister and our Abenamin hastened to meet him. By this time I suppose they are all on their return. And now take care of yourself, my Harry. The duke

brings with him the sister of our Abenamin, the fair princess Abenaide: the duchess tells me, that a lovelier creature never beheld the light; so that you must guard your heart, with double bars, against the power of this beauty. She is vain and disdainful, Sir, excessively vain, I am told; so that her pride will prove as antidote against the poison of her charms. However, I will haste to meet and welcome your most noble brother.

Harry was mounted on a haughty charger, that was bought when a colt in Mauritania: he was white as new fallen snow, save a black main and tail, and three large blood like spots on the off-shoulder. He was so perfectly instructed and subdued to the menage, that he seemed to have no will save the will of his rider; while Harry's least motion, like electricity, informed every joint and member.

The princess came foremost in an open chariot drawn by six spotted Arabians. The chariot was plated here and there with burnished gold, and emblazoned with gems of lustre. But if the eye could scarce bear the blaze of the vehicle, much less could it support the brightness of the beauty who sat enthroned within it.

Harry bowed twice, as he approached, but she scarce deigned a perceptible nod

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 243

of acknowledgment to his salute. Our hero felt himself piqued. Proud beauty ! thought he, I thank you for your timely prevention of a passion that perhaps, might have proved unhappy to me. He then passed forward with affected carelessness to salute the duke.

When he came up, the coach stopped, and Harry, flying from his saddle, approached the window, while his steed stood trembling but motionless behind him.

My lord, said Harry, seizing the duke's hand and respectfully kissing it, if you were sensible of the joy that my heart receives from your presence, I think it would make you nearly as happy as myself. My sweet fellow, said the duke, I have often heard of you at Paris, as also by the letters of my love here ; my longing at last is gratified, though my wonder is increased.

But madam, says Harry, what have you done with my little playfellow, what's become of my Abenamin ? O, cried the duchess, laughing, he is forthcoming I warrant you ; but what has so bewitched you to him ? I think you could not be fonder if he were a mistress. True, madam, answered Harry, sighing ; I never look to have a mistress that I shall love

244 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

half as well; but pray put me out of pain, and let me know where he is. Be pacified, said the smiling duke, he is not far off; and here is my hand and promise that you shall see him before night.

Our hero then turned, and touching his left hand to the shoulder of his horse, he rose perpendicular, like a pyramid of fire, and again descended on his seat, as a flake of snow on a rose-bud. He then touched his white wand to the neck of his steed, who instantly mounted the air, like a winged Pegasus; while the duchess shouted out; thinking her Harry a gone-man; but he returned as composed as though he were seated on a bed of cotton.

The coach now began to move, and Harry put his wand to the flank of his horse, who, turning his head to the carriage, as of his own accord, moved sidelong toward Enfield with a proud but gentle prancing; while the duke cried out, Look, look! O the boy, the graceful lovely boy!

As our hero attended the carriage of the duke, the princess and her train had got to the house and alighted, while Harry opened the coach-door, and handed out the noble pair, who alternately kissed and took him to their arms. Mr Clinton then came forth and received them all with

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 245

transport. But Harry, under some pretence, walked away ruminating, in order to avoid the disdainful regards of the young lady.

In the mean time, our company, rejoicing and caressing each other all the way, had got slowly, though very lovingly, to the great mansion parlour. The duke then respectfully taking the young lady by the hand, Permit me, brother, says he, to recommend to you my lovely ward, the fair princess of Morocco. The lady then gently bent one knee toward the ground, while she received the cordial blessing and salute of the old gentleman.

They then took their seats. When Mr Clinton, while he looked more earnestly on the princess, grew suddenly affected, and called out for a glass of fair water and hartshorn. When he drank it, he found himself in a measure restored; and lifting his hands, he cried, I protest one would think that nature had copied this young and lovely creature from an image that has lain impressed upon my heart near these forty years.

You are in the right, my brother, exclaimed the duke, it is even as you surmise. Allow me then, once more, to introduce to you the counterpart of our once-adorable Louisa; to introduce to you

my niece and your own offspring, my brother; even the daughter of your still living and ever precious Eloifa! The princess then sprung forward, and dropping precipitately at the feet of her grandfather, she put her face between his knees, and, seizing both hands, she bathed them with her tears, crying, My father, O my father, my dear, my dearest father, how inexpressibly blessed I think myself to be the offspring of such a father! Mr Clinton then raising her, and seating her fondly on his knee, and grasping her to his bosom, I will not ask, he cried, how these miracles came about; it is enough that I feel the attraction which pulls you into my heart. And so saying, their tears flowed, till they mingled on the flooring.

Go, my angel, said Mr Clinton, and take yonder seat, that I may view and delight my soul with your sight, at leisure. My eyes begin at these years to see best at a distance.

At length, the soft voice of our Harry was heard in the hall; and the duke, whispering his brother, requested him for a little time to take no notice of what had passed.

Our hero then entered, bowing respectfully and gracefully, but carelessly toward

the side where the princess sat. He then took his seat beside the duke, and bending fondly to him, and seizing a hand, with both his hands, he pressed it to his lips and cried, Welcome, welcome, my dearest lord, to the house and the hearts of your truest lovers!

Then, giving a glance to the side where the princess sat, he caught a glimpse of her attractions, and sighing, said to himself, O, the pity, the pity! But, no matter; her pride shall never suffer a single charm to take place; and, so thinking, he turned his eyes aside.

Mean time, Abenaide arose, with as little noise as a hare from her seat; and stealing round, like a cat circumventing a mouse, she came behind Harry's chair, and reaching and covering an eye, with each of her hands, she turned his head to her, and made a sound with her lips, as though she had kissed him. Harry opened his eyes in utter astonishment; while in a twinkling standing before him, she chuckled a laugh, and cried, My Harry, what, have you forgot me? Don't you remember your old playfellow, your little friend Abenamin?

Harry's eyes were now opened, in the midst of the hurry and agitation of his soul. At a glimpse he took in the whole

248 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

oppression of her beauties; and casting himself, quick as a glance of lightning, at her feet, he seized the hem of her robing, and glued it to his mouth.

At length, lifting up his eyes, he cried, Ah, what are all these wonders to me, or my happiness, unless my Abenamin will also become my Abenaide? That, replied the princess, is not at my option; there sits my lord and father, at whose disposal I am.

Harry then rose, and, throwing himself at the feet of his revered patron, embraced his legs in silence, while Mr Clinton cried out, Yes, My Harry, I understand you; nothing shall ever be wanting to the happiness of my darling, that the power of his tender parent and loving uncle can effect. I can have nothing in heaven or earth that is not the property of my Harry. Harry kissed his feet and sprung up.

Mr Clinton then continued, I aver I am still in a labyrinth. Did you not say, my Abenaide, that you were also our Abenamin? I did, my lord, says she, but I did not dare to avow myself. Ah, what a painful struggle did that restriction cost me! while I panted to catch and to cling to your honoured feet; while I used to look and gaze upon you unperceived;

while my heart swelled with affection, and my eyes with restrained tears; and while I kissed, in secret, the book that you read, and the ground that you trode on. Abenaide then sat down, and Harry, lightly throwing himself on the ground beside her, looked beseechingly around, and cried, My lord, my dearest lady, our still precious Fanny Goodall, can you vouch, can you warrant that I am safe in this matter? Then looking up to the princess, and drinking her in, No, he cried, you cannot engage it; I feel that I shall perish in the very ecstasy of the expectation of being united to her.

Just then Mr Meekly came in. He had been long and far away, upon many a blessed tour of doing good through the earth; but as soon as he heard of the arrival of his beloved patron and young lord, he rode post to embrace them.

Harry sprung from love to friendship, and catching him in his arms, cried, O, my Meekly, my dearest Meekly, how seasonably you come, to temper, by your advice, the insufferable transports of my soul! Behold the regent of my heart, behold the queen of all my wishes!

Meekly then fixed his eyes upon the princess, and soon after exclaimed; Gracious father! what do I see? Can the Louisa

be refuscitated, and now raised from the dead? O then, it must be so, she must be her descendent. No one, save my peerless patroness, could produce the likeness of my patroness. But how this blessed miracle was brought about is the question.

That is my question too, my dear Meekly, said Mr Clinton, if my most noble brother would be so good as to solve it. I will gratify you, gentlemen, said the duke, in as few words as possible. Meanwhile, the princess withdrew.

On my embassy to the court of Morocco, I had several private interviews with the emperor before my credentials were opened in public. I had the good fortune to be liked by him, so that he suffered no day to pass without seeing me. His name was Abenamin; he was accounted a great captain; he exceeded all in his dominions for grace of person and beauty of aspect; and that which rendered him still more singular was, that he had given liberty to all the ladies of his seraglio, and, for many years, had kept constant to the reigning sultana, said to be the most exquisite beauty upon earth.

As we grew more intimate in the exuberance of his affection for his empress, he could not refrain from speaking of her to me; and he promised that, before I de-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 251

parted, I should see and converse with her; a grace, he said, never granted to any other man.

At length, the day being appointed for my public entry, I rode through the city; attended by a sumptuous train, and alighting before the palace, advanced to the hall of audience.

The emperor was seated, with his sultana at his right hand, upon a throne of ivory. As soon as I had approached the presence, and began to open my commission, the empress gave a great shriek, and fell over in a swoon upon the bosom of her husband.

The royal Abenamin instantly turned pale as death, tore off her veil with trembling hands to give her air, and called me to his assistance, as it is accounted profanation for any Moor to touch the person of the empress. But, O heaven! O my friends! think what was my astonishment, when, in the pale face of the queen, I beheld the loved features of our darling Eloisa.

The court broke up in confusion, and her women came hurrying with drops and essences. As soon as she recovered, she opened her eyes upon me; and reaching out her arms, and catching me to her, she cried, O my uncle, my dearest uncle,

252 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

am I so blest'd then as to behold you before I expire!

The monarch in the mean time looked upon me with a jealous eye, and twice put his hand to the hilt of his dagger, but checked his rising indignation, till he should have the mystery of his queen's behaviour explained. The women then raised her up and bore her to her apartment; while the emperor, turning to me, with no very friendly aspect, ordered me to follow him.

When I had attended a considerable time in the antichamber, he came forth, with a serene and joyous countenance, and embracing me, cried, O my friend, my dearkinsman, how transported am I to find and acknowledge you for such! the parent of my angel becomes a part of myself!

He then led me by the hand into the bedchamber of my Eloisa, where we renewed our caresses without restraint, But the monarch, fearing that these emotions would be too much for her, told me that he had something for my private ear till dinner; and took me into an adjoining closet.

There, seating, and taking me affectionately by the hand, I will now tell you, my uncle, says he, how I came by this inestimable treasure of your niece.

I had fitted out a royal ship of my own, not as a corsair, but rather for trade in the Mediterranean. On their return from the coast of Egypt, as they passed, after a violent hurricane, within sight of old Carthage, my people perceived, at a distance, a sloop stranded on a shoal of sand about a league from the shore. Immediately they sent out a boat, and took the distressed company in, consisting of my charmer, two female companions, and three servants in livery, beside the boatmen.

The intendants of my ship behaved themselves with all possible respect toward the young lady and her attendants; and endeavoured to quiet her terrors, by assuring her that she was free, and that their prince was a person of too much honour and humanity to derive any advantage from the disasters of the unfortunate.

The moment that they brought her before me, pale, trembling, and in tears: while she dropt on her knees, and lifted to me her fine eyes in a petitioning manner, the gates of my soul opened to the sweetly affecting image, and ever after closed, on their own accord, upon it.

Ah, I cried, heavenly creature, calm, calm your causeless fears! I swear by our prophet and the God of our prophet, that

I would rather suffer the gaunch, than put the smallest constraint on your person or inclinations. You are free, madam, you shall ever be free, save so far as I may bind you by my tender offices and affections.

I raised her, and she grew something better assured; when bending a knee in my turn, I kissed her robe and cried, look not upon me as your tyrant, look not on me as your lover; but look upon me as your friend, the tenderest and truest of friends, who shall ever be ready to sacrifice his own happiness to your's.

From that time I studied every amusement, every diversion, that might serve to dissipate the timid shrinkings of her remaining apprehensions; while I conducted myself toward her with a distant, though fond respect, not even presuming to touch her ivory-hand.

In the mean time my soul sickened, and grew cold to all other women. If you were ever in love, my dear D'Aubigny, you know that it is as chaste as well as a tender passion. I languished indeed for her, I longed and languished to death; but then it was rather for her heart than her person that I languished.

One day, as she heaved a heavy but half-suppressed sigh, Ah, my angel, I cried, I can have no joy but your's, and yet

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 255

you have griefs to which you keep your friend, your Abenamin, a stranger. True, my lord, says she, tears breaking from her; all your bounties have not been able to silence the calls of kindred, or claims of nature within me. Ah, my parents, my dear parents; I feel more for you than I feel even for myself, in being torn from you!

The weight of her affliction fell, like a mountain, on my soul, and crushed me to her feet. You would leave me then, Eloisa, you wish to leave me; but your generosity delays to tell me so, for fear of breaking my heart.——Well, be it so——go from me you know I cannot survive you——but my death is of no consequence, my Eloisa shall be happy.——I will go this instant, I will dispatch my swiftest galley to Languedoc—I will write word to your parents that you are safe, that you are beloved, and yet pure and untouched, since respected as a deity.——I will invite them to come and take possession of my treasures, my dominions, my heart: but——should they reject my suit, I again swear by Alla, to send you to them, laden with wealth, though I myself should drop dead at the instant of your departure.

The noble soul of my Eloisa became instantly affected. She caught a hand between both of her's, and bathing it with tears, cried, O, now indeed you have bound me by chains infinitely stronger than all the shackles that fasten the slaves to the galleys of Africa.

I kept firm to my engagement, and, in a few weeks, my winged messengers returned. But, O the tidings, the very doleful tidings for my beloved! they brought word that they found no creature, save two ancient domestics in the great hotel, as two ravens in the midst of a lonely forest.

From these they learned, that my Eloisa's mother and little brother were dead; that her grandmother was dead; her aunt the marchioness also dead; and that the marquis had retired they knew not whither.

She wept incessantly, and I wept with her.—At length she softly said; You have conquered, my lord, you have conquered, I am subdued by your weight of affection! O that you could but conform to one article more, that we might be united as one heart, and one soul, and one sentiment, for ever!

It was now, for the first time, that I dared to seize her hand; I crushed it to my

lips, and thrust it to my soul. What would you enjoin, I cried? I would do any thing, dare any thing to be united to my Eloisa! in life and in death, body to body, and dust to dust, never, never to be sundered, till her spirit should make the heaven of my spirit hereafter.

Ah, she suddenly exclaimed, that, that is the very thing I so eagerly desire. Let the God of my heart be the God of your heart, let the God of my spirit be the God of your spirit; so shall we be united in him, and jointly partake of his blessedness through eternity!

Ah, I cried, can I forego the divine precepts of our prophet? Your prophet, says she, preaches only to the eye and the ear, and that is all that he does or can pretend to: but CHRIST, my prophet, preaches in the heart, to the affections. From him is every good motion divine or human: He is the unknown God of your spirit, my master, my Abenamin; and you feel his precious power while you disavow his name.

I was puzzled, I was silenced. I bent a knee in reverence, kissed her hand, and withdrew.

I sent for the chief of the Christian missionaries, throughout the city and country. I consulted each of them in private,

258 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

but received no satisfaction from them. They all appeared equally zealous for my reformation, but attempted it by different, and even by opposite arguments.

Some would have persuaded me to be Christian, by shewing the absurdity of every religion that was not Christian. Others affirmed, that my eternal salvation depended on my conformity to certain external rules and penances. While the greatest number inveighed against the Christians of every other denomination, and would have thrust me wholly from Christ, if I did not consent to receive him within their stinted pale.

I knew not what to do: I was put to a stand, and quite confounded by this multiplicity of conflicting opinions. At length a countryman of my own came to me from the desert. He had been a great sinner, but was converted by the sense of his sins, and he was revered and resorted to by the friendless and afflicted.

I opened my soul to him, with all its doubts and difficulties.—My friend in CHRIST, said he, with a gentle and still voice, they have been leading you all astray, quite away from the haven that stretches forth its arms for the reception of long-toiled mariners, whom storms have at length compelled to seek a final port.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 259

The God of your creation can alone be your redemption; the God of your nature can alone be the salvation of the nature that he imparted. But who shall convince you of this? Not all the angels in heaven, nor all the doctors upon earth, till the Christ of your heart shall be pleased to convince you that you are, as indeed you are, (however mighty a monarch,) a poor, frail, erring, vile, and despicable creature; subjected to innumerable lapses and infirmities, sickness, passions, and crosses, griefs, agonies, and death. When this is effectually done, the whole of the business is done. You will call for and catch at a Saviour, in the sensibility of your want of him. When you come thus laden with your sins to him, he will in no wise cast you out. But he will take you, as Noah took the wearied dove into the ark, he will take you within the veil of his own temple of rest; and all sects, forms, and ceremonies, will be as the outward courts, with which you shall have no manner of commerce or concern.

My heart felt the weight and the fullness of conviction. I took him to my arms, and requested instant baptism. My Eloisa was called; we locked ourselves in; and I was washed by water and faith in-

to Christ, while my kneeling angel wept a stream of delight beside me.

It is said that possession cloyes. But I experienced, my dear D'Aubigny, that love never cloyes. Every day with my Eloisa seemed to triumph, in heart-felt happiness, over my first bridal day. But O what was the joy, the exultation of my fond heart, when she gave me to be the father of a little daughter of paradise!

One day, while we were toying and fooling with the smiling infant, and throwing her as she crowed from the one to the other, Ah! my husband, cries Eloisa, how poor I was lately, no parents, no kindred, nothing but my Abenamin upon the whole earth! and now God has been pleased to make my affliction to laugh, and to give this babe for a further bond, a precious link of love between us.

He was just in this part of his narration when the music sounded to the banquet. We instantly rose and joined our Eloisa.

When the collation was removed, Madam, said I to the empress, have you ever heard of a relation of your's, christened by the name of Fanny Goodall, and lately countess of Maitland? I have, said she, often heard my fond father speak of her with filling eyes. She is in this city, ma-

dam. She is no longer countess of Maitland. She is now doubly your relation, your aunt as well as your cousin; and goes by the title of the marchioness D'Aubigny. With the good leave of my lord here I will bring her to you directly.

I went to the palace appointed for my residence; I there gave my Fanny a few heads of the story of our Eloisa, and took her hastily to the presence.

The ladies looked at each other, in long and silent admiration. Then opening their arms, and rushing together, they continued some minutes locked in mutual embraces.

Madam, said the emperor, smiling, I think I ought to be allowed the same liberties with my aunt that your husband took with his niece. Whereon he welcomed and caressed her with an affectionate fervour.

O, exclaimed the royal fair, how very poor, and how very rich our God can suddenly make us! But then, lord of my life, to think of parting, of parting with these dear friends again, perhaps never to see them more---that's what sinks and wrings my heart in the very midst of exultation.

That, my love, said the emperor, is the very important article on which I wish

to consult with you and our friends here, our dear kindred in Christ. But I must first shew them their young relation, my little enchantress, my precious pearl, my eye-delighting Abenaide.

He then stepped forth, and, after a while, led in a gracefully-moving creature, but veiled from the head to the waist. Throw up your veil, my love, says he; here are none but your friends, your very dear relations, your lovely aunt, and your uncle the marquis and marchioness D'Aubigny.

She did as she was ordered; and instantly broke upon my sight, like a new glory arisen from mid-day.

My Fanny seized upon her, as desirous of devouring her. And I, in turn, took her to me with tearful eyes, as almost persuaded that I embraced the newly-revived person of my dearest sister Louisa; so perfect was the resemblance in every grace and feature.

When we had nearly oppressed the celestial looking maid with our insatiate caresses, she seized our hands, and kissing them, cried, What a blessed day is this that enriches Abenaide with two parents more; another precious father, and another lovely mother; happy, happy Abenaide!

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 263

Her royal father then gave a beck, and she instantly vanished; while her absence seemed to cast a shade throughout the room.

The monarch then deeply musing and heavily sighing, began——I am now, my dearest friends, friends beloved above the world, and all that it contains, I am now to open to you my inmost heart, and to reveal a purpose whereon I have been ruminating these many months, but could not hit on an expedient for bringing it to pass. How opportune has our JESUS sent you to us on this occasion!

I have but two children living; my Abenaide, and a son, by a former woman of my seraglio. His name is Abencerrage; he is a youth renowned in the field, but of a proud and impetuous demeanour. He had long conceived an illicit passion for his young and lovely sister. At length the fire broke forth, and he lately attempted her honour.

I would have instantly put him to death, had I any other heir to succeed to my dominions. I therefore contented myself with banishing him my court and my presence; though I am sensible that this has not availed for the extinguishing his horrid flame.

Now, my friends, should I die, or should this violent boy break into rebellion, for he is the favourite of the licentious soldiery, I tremble to think what would become of my bright-eyed dove, within the talents of such a vulture.

This, together with my eager desire of quitting a kingdom of infidels, and of joining with the blessed society and communion of saints, has, after many struggles, determined me to abdicate my throne; as soon as I can amass and transmit a fund sufficient for supporting my Eloisa and myself, with becoming dignity, in her native country.

Ah, my lord, I cried, clasping him passionately in my arms, regard not your treasures, delay not a moment for that! your Eloisa's relations, both by father and mother, are possessed of princely fortunes, and they will be all freely at the disposal of your majesty.

Ah, my D'Aubigny, said he, I am not yet so duly mortified a Christian as needlessly to elect a state of dependence, or willingly to descend at once from the king to the beggar. I have however been preparing: I have already converted a large part of my effects into bills and jewels, of high value, but light portage, to the

mount, as I think, of about sixty millions of French money: this I will transmit by you; and as soon as I shall have compassed an equal sum, I will stay no longer in Africa, I will fly to your bosoms, my precious friends.

In the mean time, this violent and lustful boy gives no rest to my apprehensions. It is therefore necessary that I commit my Abenaide to your trust. It is necessary, I say, that I tear away my choicest limb, the dearest part of my vitals! Support me, CHRIST, in the trial! but it must be gone through.

This, however, must be done with all possible privacy. I am persuaded that my young villain has his spies in and about my palace. I shall therefore request my dear aunt to disguise my little girl in boy's apparel, and to blacken every part of her visible complexion, that she may pass unnoticed, as your page, through the midst of my attendants; as also that it may prove, during the travels of my darling, a preservative against the lust of the eye, and any further attempt tending to violation.

At length the time approached and pressed for my departure; but how to part was the question. All attendants were ordered to avoid the presence far away.

Our metamorphosed Abenaide stood weeping beside us, while her father and mother crushed us, successively, to their bosoms. All was passion, a gush of tears, but not a word was uttered on any part.

O, my D'Aubigny, cried the emperor at length, friend, brother of my heart, can you conceive what I feel at this instant? I regard not the world, nor the things of the world. Omit such necessary accommodations as are common to us with brutes; and all, belonging to the immortal and divine humanity of man, is magnetism, is fellowship, the feeling as of steel to adamant, and of adamant to steel. There is the friendship, the endearment, the love passing love, and surpassing all other enjoyment. If we meet again, my D'Aubigny, I shall anticipate my heaven!

Again he embraced his little angel; and again he embraced his queen, and besought her to be comforted. We then took leave, as for the last; and again they called us back, and embraced and took leave again; till, seeing no end, I suddenly broke away, hurrying with us our Abenaide, for fear of observation. I forgot, however, to tell you, that, the day before our departure, the royal Abenamin had enjoined me to set apart twenty millions of livres for the portion of his child,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 267

in case she should be married to any great prince or potentot; requesting me, at the same time, not to put any constraint on the inclinations of his lamb.

I have little further to say, my brother. We arrived safe at Paris, where we received your letter; and, impatient to make you happy, I dispatched my Fanny with her train and your Abenaide before me; enjoining them, however, not to reveal our secret till my arrival. For as I had charged myself with the loss of your Eloisa, I deemed myself best entitled to make you reparation in person. But I ought not to omit, that, before I left Paris, I received a further remittance of twenty millions from your son-in-law; so that we may speedily look to have the royal pair in England.

Soon after, a post chaise whirled into the court, and Harry, flying out, caught Clement and Arabella into his strict embrace. He then hurried them in, where Mr Clinton received and caressed, and introduced them to the duke and duchess, as persons of great merit, and his highly-valued friends. He then presented to them his Abenaide, who saluted Clement, and embraced Arabella, with an affectionate familiarity.

O Sir, cried our hero, kissing his uncle's hand, am I to be the last person in the world, whom you will honour with a salute from your bewitching daughter? I ask your pardon, my lord, said Mr Clinton, solemnly—Allow me then at length to repair my omission, by presenting to your earlship her little highness Abenaide.

The duke and duchess and Meekly laughed! but Harry was not a whit the slower in laying hold of his advantage.

He kissed her forehead, her eyes, her cheeks; and, lastly, dwelt upon her lips, as though he would have infused his soul between them. Harry, Harry, cried Mr Clinton, I will never introduce you to my girl again, unless you promise not to kiss so hard, and bring so much blood into her face.

Just then a footman entered; My lord, says he to Harry, here are three carriages and several horsemen waiting without the gate; they inquire for one master Fenton, who, they say, lives with the earl of Moreland; but I assured them there was no such person in the house. O Sir, said Harry, these are our old friends the Fieldings, and out he flew.

As he approached the carriages, the company gave a shout of joy. Why, Sir, said Mr Fielding, a servant denied you

to us, and said that no one of the name of Fenton lived here. O, says Harry, don't heed the blockhead, he is but a new comer.

He then opened the doors of the carriages, and handed and kissed them, in turns, as they came out; Mr and Mrs Fielding, the reverend Mr Catharines and his fainted Phæbe, and Ned and his blooming bride.

Mr Clinton received them at the door, with the joy of his heart apparent in his countenance. He then introduced them to his most noble brother and sister, to his friend Meekly; and lastly, he presented his Abenaide to them, on whom they all gazed in mute and reverential astonishment.

Harry then observing that his uncle had not equally presented his daughter to Ned, Sir, said he, I apprehend that this is not quite fair; I have already kissed the fair bride of my friend, with all my heart; and it is but honest that he should be favoured with a salute from mine in turn.

Harry then took Ned by the hand and presented him to his beloved. While Ned bent the knee, and touching her hand tremblingly, looked awfully to her face; and said: Yes, bride of Eden, lovely extract of every beauty! you alone can reward, you alone can deserve him; you

alone are fitted to be the mate of my incomparable lord and master, my patron and preserver! So saying, he lightly touched his lips to the polished hand. But the praises of her Harry had gone, with a pleasant trickling, to the heart of Abenaide, and, gently raising Ned, she affectionately saluted him with a glistening eye.

Pray Sir, said Mr Fielding, whisperingly, to Mr Clinton, is the earl of Moreland in company?—That is he, Sir, pointing to Harry.—O then, cried Fielding, he is titled below his merits; it was for an emperor that nature intended him.

Dinner was then served.—During the repast the duke said, Let us not, my brother, keep our Harry in pain: why should we delay the happiness of children so very dear to us? With regard to your child's marriage to some mighty prince, as your son-in-law hinted, I think her more ennobled and more illustrious by her marriage with our hero here, who purchased her at his peril, than if she were mated to the greatest potentate on earth.

You must excuse me, my noble brother, said Mr Clinton; I will have no clandestine doings in this business. My girl shall be married in the face and witnessing of thousands; lest hereafter this young rogue should have the effron-

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 271

tery to deny her. What day of the week is this? Thursday, I think; let Monday se'nnight be the day.

Harry rose and pressed and kissed the hand of the duke with rapture, and then kissed the hand of his patron in silent submission.

They kept the Fieldings with them for three days. But Harry would not part with his Clement, nor Abenaide with Arabella, till the marriage should be over. Harry, in the presence of these two friends, attempted to take some little accustomed liberties, under her name of Abenamin. But the proprietor of his heart sweetly repulsed him, and cried, No, no, honest friend, I will box with you whenever and as often as you please; but no more wrestling, my Harry!

In the mean time, all preparations were pushed into forwardness by Mr Clinton. The many shops of the many towns, within many miles around, were emptied of their boards and sheeting, their knives and forks, &c. Thousands of tables and forms were framed, thousands of tents were erected. Proclamation was made in every village, and all people within thirty miles were invited to the wedding.

When the day approached, one hundred oxen were slain, five hundred sheep, three hundred swine, with fifty fat deer, &c. &c. The spits fried, and the cauldrons smoked over the fires of many a field.

At length the auspicious morning rose; and Harry and his bride were already up and dressed in their respective apartments.

The princess was habited, after the Persian fashion, in a vest of silver brocading, scalloped over a petticoat of the same fabric, that flowed in a train behind. A scarf of cerulean tint flew between her right shoulder and her left hip; being buttoned at each end by a rose of rubies; her shining tresses of jetty black, bound together at her neck beneath a huge amethyst, fell down in luxuriant ringlets, and shaded and revealed by turns the fine bend of her tapering waist; a coronet of diamonds, through which there waved a white branch of the feathers of the ostrich, was inserted on the left decline of her lovely head; and a stomacher of inestimable brilliants rose beneath her dazzling bosom, and, by a fluctuating blaze of unremitted glory, checked and turned the eye away from too presumptuous a gaze.

Our hero, coming forth, beheld her, as a pillar of fire, just issuing from her

antichamber. He stepped back, as she advanced, and fixed his eyes upon her in mute astonishment; then springing forward, he fell prostrate and kissed the hem of her robing. Again rising on one knee, he lifted his hands toward heaven, and his eyes to her glowing countenance: Oppressive power of beauty! he cried, O, may every day rise, like this, on my soul-enrapturing Abenaide, encircling her with friendship, love, and joy, and the knee of admiring thousands!

Arabella attended her royal friend, and Clement his noble pupil, just as Longfield entered to give an account of his expedition. But he had scarce begun his detail, when, catching the images of his long-parted friends, he cried, Bless me, my lord, Mrs Clement, I think! Yes, my Longfield, said Harry, and here too is your old and fast friend Hammel Clement. Clement would not have known Longfield in his present genteel plight; but, hearing his name, and recollecting him at a glance, he flew and seized upon him with a strenuous embrace. Arabella then advanced to welcome her old preserver, but Longfield respectfully bowed and shrunk back.

You shall not escape me so, my dear Mr Longfield, says she; I cannot forget

what I owe you, even my life and reputation ; and I bless the Father of mercies, who has put it in our power to pay part of our debt : and so saying, she embraced him with freedom and cordiality. Yes, my dear Longfield, cried Hammel, your's is the half of our fortunes, and more than the half of our hearts. Your heart, Sir, said Longfield, will ever be most valuable ; but as to any thing additional, the bounty of my young master has rendered all further fortune quite superfluous to me.

Longfield then beckoned his lord forth, that he might relate to his eye, rather than to his ear, the success of his commission. They hastened to a long barn, where he shewed Harry two ranges of beautiful children, one of a hundred chosen girls, another of a hundred chosen boys, all dressed in a clean and elegant uniform. Harry walked between the ranks, his heart exulting in the sense of its own divine humanity. Then, embracing his agent, Yes, my Longfield, he cried, these shall be indeed my children ; and I will prove a true and affectionate father to them. But let us hasten to bestow upon them a tender mother too, I trust.

He flew back, as a glimpse of lightning, and seizing and half-devouring the hand of his bride, Will you pardon me,

my beloved, says he, some matters that happened before our union? I have collected all the children I ever had before marriage. I scorn any thing that is clandestine. They wait for your inspection; and I hope that you will not prove a hard step-mother to them. You are a rogue, says she, archly smiling, and giving him a pat on the cheek; but come along; and so saying, away they tripped.

The princess walked, with a silent and musing attention, up and down the ranges. Her heart grew strongly affected, and, taking out her handkerchief, she wiped away the dropping tear. And has my lord, says she to Longfield, has he indeed taken upon him to be a father to all this pretty host of little ones? He has, so, please your highness, says Longfield, and has accordingly clothed and provided for them. O, she cried, under the FATHER which is in heaven, he is the dearest and sweetest father that ever was upon earth! So exclaiming, she sprung at Harry, and, notwithstanding her late coyness, scarce vouchsafing a hand to his lips, she now grasped about his neck, half-smothering him with the repetition of her kisses and caresses; and then thrusting her face into his bosom, she vented her passion in tears.

On their return, they perceived Mr Clinton, the duke and duchess, all standing in the great folding-door; and, flying up the marble steps, they both bent the knee, and received the joint blessings and successive caresses of their three exulting parents.

Just then Harry spied goodman Dobson and his dame coming diffidently but puffingly up the avenue. Instantly he caught his angel by the hand, and hastened to meet them. He took them successively in his arms, and kissed them with warm affection, while, with yearning hearts and bowels, they wished him joy upon joy. They then kneeled down on each side of the princess, kissing her hands and garments, and blessing her for bestowing such a heaven of beauty upon their Harry. But as soon as Harry told her that they were his fosterers, his very dear daddy and mammy; she raised and kissed them, in turns, with their arms about their necks; and besought them to be her daddy and mammy also; for, alas, says she, my daddy and mammy are far away. Harry then gave them into the hands of his huntsman, with orders to take them to the larder.

The multitude, before this, began to thicken apace. And the youth had got

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 277

together in the great lawn, casting the coit and the sledge, and leaping over a cord that was raised between two posts.

My lovely Harry, cried the duke, I have heard things almost incredible of your prowess and action, but never saw any sample save the mounting of your Bucephalus. Will you be so good to give me some instance of your excellence among yonder young competitors, whom I suppose to be the most eminent that the shire can exhibit? Do, my Harry, said Mr Clinton, clasping and kissing him, indulge my dearest brother on this our day of jubilee.

Harry bowed, and ordered his page to bring him his quarterstaff, and dispatched another for a cord and two long poles. He then walked down the avenue, attended by the males and females of the whole family.

As they approached the lawn, a youth of uncommon vigour had cleared the former cord, though raised to something upward of five feet in height; but all who attempted to follow, either recoiled or pitched over.

Harry then caused his two poles to be erected to an elevation of ten feet, with a cord reaching from top to top. The multitude came down, in thousands, to

see what they were about. When Harry, having cleared the contested cord with a standing hop, went backward from his lofty poles about the distance of thirty paces, then rushing forward, he advanced one end of his staff to the ground, and springing and raising, and rising upon the opposite end, he pitched himself over the elevated string, while the multitude beheld him, as a new-risen phoenix, suspended and glittering in the air, and then alighting, as winged, on the other side.

The elements were rent by an universal shout, which followed and undulated after our company, till they sheltered themselves within the house.

The Fieldings then arrived, with the reverend Mr Catharines, who was appointed to join the angelic pair.

After breakfast, the carriages were ordered out. First, Mr Clinton and his Meekly moved away, in Mr Clinton's coach and six, to the church. The family of the Fieldings then followed in a coach and six, and two chariots. Next went Clement and his Arabella, in their post chaise and four. The duke and duchess then succeeded, in a sumptuous coach proudly drawn by six German greys, attended by a long retinue of French liveries, and the dutchess's women in a coach

and four. Last advanced the princess's four faithful Moors, mounted on fiery courfers, and all glittering in Barbaric gems and adornments. And last of all came our hero and his Abenaide, enthroned in her open chariot, as two pearls of the Orient in a case of burnished gold; her six spotted Arabians, restraining their impatience, beat measures with their feet, scarce seeming to advance the pace of a tortoise. Never will any fight so glorious be exhibited, till the heavenly Jerusalem shall descend upon earth.

Harry's page closed the rear, mounted on his lord's charger, who stepped foaming behind the chariot; and the long cavalcade nearly reached from the great hotel to the entrance of the town.

The croud, however, extended wide and far beyond the cavalcade. They bowed respectfully, and paid obeisance to Mr Clinton, the duke, &c. as they passed; but as soon as they got a glimpse of the chariot of their young lord, their acclamations became unremitted and almost insufferable to the ear, like the shouts of a Persian army at the rising of the sun.

Slowly as our Harry moved, the multitude strove to retard him, by throwing

280 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

themselves in his way, that they might satiate their eyes and souls with the fulness of beauty. Bended knees and lifted hands, prayers, blessings, and exclamations, were heard and seen on all sides; and, all the way as they went, thousands upon tens of thousands shouted forth the hymeneal of the celestial pair !

T H E E N D.



